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Kansas State University. Architecture Department

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This *EAP* completes 28 years of publication and begins with items of interest, including "citations received." In "book notes," we highlight *Vital Little Plans*¸ a collection of unpublished writings by the eminent urbanist **Jane Jacobs**.

Longer entries begin with museum curator **Robert Barzan's** personal consideration of the relationship between ethics and place. Anthropologist **Jenny Quillien** draws on her recent travel experiences in Bhutan to explore lived aspects of "placeness." Environmental educator **John Cameron** writes his twelfth and final "Letter from Far South." Cameron recently published these letters as *Blackstone Chronicles: Place-Making on a Tasmanian Island*. We end this issue with a critical commentary on Cameron's book written by philosopher **Isis Brook**.

Since the last *EAP*, two major figures associated with phenomenological work have died—in January, philosopher **Lester Embree**; in July, geographer **Anne Buttimer**. Both thinkers were devoted advocates of phenomenological research, and this *EAP* editor has a fond memory of Anne and Lester together at Northwestern University's bookstore as they attended the 1981 meeting of the Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences for which I had organized a special session on "phenomenologies of place." Both Anne and Lester had a wry sense of humor, and, as they perused the philosophy books together, Anne made critical comments that prompted Lester to chuckle. Whenever I saw him at other conferences, he would always ask about "lovely Sister Annette" (early in her professional career, Anne was a Dominican sister, though she later left the order). For more on Embree and Buttimer, see pp. 4–7.

"Atmosphere" book series

Edited by Italian philosopher **Tonino Griffero**, "Atmospheric Spaces" is a new monograph series published by Milan, Italy's Mimesis International.

The prospectus reads in part: "What is an 'Atmosphere'? According to aesthetic, phenomenological, and ontological perspectives, the concept is understood as a sensorial and affective quality widespread in space. It is the particular tone that sustains the experience of surroundings. 'Air', 'aura', 'milieu', 'ambiance', 'climate', 'mood', 'genius loci', 'lived space', and '*Stimmung* are all descriptors pinpointing the lived foundation of atmosphere: a vague power, without visible and discrete boundaries, which we find around us and, resonating in our lived body…." For information on the series, including book proposals, go to https://atmosphericspaces.wordpress.com/.

Place and Phenomenology

The New York publisher Rowman & Littlefield has just released *Place and Phenomenology*, a collection of 15 chapters edited by Husserlian philosopher **Janet Donohoe**. The collection's five major headings are: "place and the existential"; "sacred places"; "place, embodiment, and home"; "places rediscovered"; and "place and phenomenological limits." Donohoe writes: "This volume continues in the phenomenological tradition by investigating issues of place generally, but also in exploring issues of particular places that provide an opening for us to come to grips with how we experience place at all."
Entries include: "The Openness of Places" (**Edward Relph**); "The Double Gift—Place and Identity"; The Idea of an Existential Ecology" (**Bob Sandmeyer**); "Nature, Place and the Sacred" (**Anne Buttimer**); "From the Land Itself: The Himalayas as Sacred Landscape" (**John Cameron**); "The Living Arena of Existential Health: Space, Autonomy, and Embodiment" (**Kirsten Jacobson**); "Architecture, Place, and Phenomenology: Buildings as Lifeworlds, Atmospheres, and Environmental Wholes" (**David Seamon**); and "Unprecedented Experience and Levinas's Heideggerian Idolatry of Place" **(Bruce B. Janz**). On pp. 2–3, we provide an extract from Donohoe's introduction to the collection.

Left: A Bhutanese monk dances "Greed." Photograph by Jenny Quillien and used with permission. See her essay, "Reflections from Bhutan on the '-ness' in placeness," pp. 11–13, which describes her recent visit there.

Christopher Alexander and a new master's degree in Architecture

Building Beauty: Ecological Design and Construction Process is a new international program offering a master's degree in architecture and sponsored by the *Universitaria Suor orsola Benincasa* in Naples, Italy. The program is founded on the ideas of architect **Christopher Alexander**, particularly his efforts to understand and make wholeness. The program offers "a profound experience of designing and making, revolving around the exploration of the reality of feelings and an evidence-based approach to the architectural process…. The program emphasizes the generation of beauty by means of the practical work of making; it is offered to all those willing to explore that beauty that makes a difference in the world." http://www.buildingbeauty.net/.

Publishing opportunity

"Phenomenologies of Sacrifice" is the theme of a special issue of *Metodo*, a journal of international studies in phenomenology and philosophy. Suggested topics include: sacrifice and religion; sacrifice and community; sacrifice and war; sacrifice and waste; and the history and cultures of sacrifice. Deadline for paper submissions is March 15, 2018. http://www.metodo-rivista.eu/index.php/metodo.

Phenomenology commons

The **Open Commons for Phenomenology** is a non-profit, international scholarly association, the mission of which is to provide free access to the full corpus of phenomenology as well as to develop and maintain a digital infrastructure available for curation, study, and dissemination. The site hosts research materials related to phenomenology, defined broadly as any work in philosophy or in other human sciences connected with the ideas of "canonical phenomenologists" like Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The site encompasses a digital platform hosting all texts, documents, and images in open access, featuring interactive contents and offering an extensive set of digital tools such as multi-text search, data visualizations, citation index, bibliometric statistics, annotations, and social sharing.

When fully operational by 2020, the Open Commons repository aims to contain the full corpus of phenomenology. As of November 2016, entries number 22,000, about ten percent of the estimated total. Note that the site includes pdfs of all past volumes of *EAP*. The site's homepage is http://ophen.org. The *EAP* repository is available at http://ophen.org/journals.php.

Conferences

The tenth annual conference of the **Forum of Architecture, Culture, and Spirituality** (ACS) takes place June 7–10, 2018, in Coral Gables and Miami, Florida. The conference theme is "Architecture and Displacement." The event is sponsored by the University of Miami. Symposium chairs are **Nader Ardalan** and **Karla Britton**.

Presentations from the first four ACS conferences (revised as chapters) are published in the edited collection, *Architecture, Culture and Spirituality*, originally only in hardcover but now available in paperback from New York's Routledge publishers. http://www.acsforum.org/.

The annual **"Back to the things themselves"** conference (BTTTT!) takes place during the annual Congress of the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences, to be held May 26–June 1, 2018, at the University of Regina in Ragina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The prospectus reads in part: "Traditionally, phenomenology has been conceived of as the practice of carefully describing the appearances of things in their givenness, without drawing on metaphysical, scientific, or other explanatory preconceptions. However, in recent years a movement has arisen which holds that phenomenology is not merely descriptive in nature, but also an activity of engaged critique comprised of the ongoing questioning of concrete situations, institutions, and assumptions that structure lived experience. Critical phenomenology therefore often interrogates social phenomena and political structures, as well as the limits and challenges of phenomenological inquiry itself." https://btttt.net/.

The **Society for the Phenomenology of Religious Experience** is sponsoring the conference, "Phenomenology in Dialogue: Religious Experience and the Lifeworld," which takes place January 26–27, 2018, in Berkeley, California. Conference hosts are the Graduate Theological Union, the Jesuit School of Theology, and the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute.

The conference focus is "critical issues in phenomenological research of religious experience" and "the phenomenology of religious experience in various domains of the lifeworld—e.g., ministry, preaching, corporate world, ecology, health practices, and pastoral and clinical counseling." http://sophere.org/.

Toward a Phenomenology of Social Change is a conference sponsored by the Czech Academy of Sciences' Institute of Philosophy, to be held Nov. 1–2, 2017, in Prague, Czech Republic. The conference focus is "a systematic evaluation of the phenomenological approach to social relations and interactions." More information: http://oskf.flu.cas.cz/akce/phenomenology-of-social-change-conference.

From *Place and Phenomenology*

Taken as a whole, *Place and Phenomenology* [see p. 1] provides a broad view of the ways in which phenomenology can be brought to bear on questions and issues of place. It offers a deep look into some particular places with the consequence of teaching us something about being creatures who are always concerned with place, whether we are attentive to it or not.

Beyond that, [the chapters in this book] keep us mindful of the role of places in our lives and the deeply interwoven meaning of our being with place. Whether we come to questions of place from the standpoint of geography or nursing or gender studies or architecture or art or just curiosity, phenomenology helps us to take seriously our encounter with place and to think critically about the place of place.

Phenomenology has much to offer when it comes to place. Some of those things are constant themes in each of the chapters contained herein. First, phenomenology offers us a way to think about place that moves beyond a geometrized and objectivized view. It leads

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us to an understanding of the foundational connection between humans and places.

Phenomenology allows us to overcome the division stemming in part from Descartes that convinced us that the world is over there somewhere while I am here. We recognize that the over there and the here are what they are because of our experience of them. We are inseparable from places, and places are inseparable from us. The meaning of our lives and the meaning of places are deeply embedded in one another with all the messiness that entails.

And if we have overcome Cartesian dualism through phenomenological investigation of place, we can also begin to recognize that attentiveness to place is attentiveness to self. Place matters, and it matters deeply. It matters not simply because we feel duty-bound to protect our home planet but because what we are has everything to do with our home planet (Janet Donohoe, Introduction, *Place and Phenomenology*, pp. xvi–xvii).

Citations received

Oren Bader & Aya Peri Bader, 2016. Coordination, Negotiation, and Social Attention: The Presence of Others and the Constitution of Extraordinary Architectural Space. *Pragmatics & Cognition*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 416–36.

This article examines "the influence of the embodied presence of other human beings on the constitution of a special type of urban architecture—the extraordinary architectural space." The authors argue that "being in the direct presence of others constitutes this extraordinary architectural space in the sense that it transforms the built setting into a negotiated place and reveals for the subject some of its extraordinary properties." The research context is "three extraordinary public buildings"—the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, New York City's Guggenheim Museum, and Copenhagen's Danish Royal Library.

Thomas Barrie, 2017. *House and Home: Cultural Contexts, Ontological Roles*. London: Routledge.

This architect "presents how the search for home in an unpredictable world led people to create myths about the origins of architecture, houses for their gods, and house tombs for eternal life…." He "illustrates the perennial role and capacity of architecture to articulate the human condition, position it more meaningfully in the world, and assist in our collective homecoming."

Kate Darian-Smith and Julie Willis, eds., 2017. *Designing Schools: Space, Place and Pedagogy*. Routledge: London.

The 18 chapters of this edited volume consider "the close connections between the design of school buildings and educational practices throughout the 20th century to today. Through international case studies that span the Americas, Europe, Africa and Australia, this volume examines historical innovations in school architecture and situates these within changing pedagogical ideas about the 'best' ways to educate children." The chapters are organized in terms of three themes: "school buildings," "school spaces," and "school cultures."

Anthony Chemero & Stephan Käufer, 2016. *Phenomenology: An Introduction*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

The latest in several recent efforts to provide an accessible introduction to phenomenology, though the authors, both philosophers, take the standard philosophical approach of overviewing, chapter by chapter, the usual phenomenological thinkers (Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and so forth). Unfortunately, the authors offer no explicit discussion of what phenomenology is or how it might be done in terms of real-world phenomena. Includes chapters on "Hubert Dreyfus and the Phenomenological Critique of Cognitivism" and "Phenomenological Cognitive Science." This book will mostly confuse newcomers, since it offers no broad picture of what phenomenology is as a way of understanding and a method for looking and seeing. Much better introductions remain Dermot Moran's *Phenomenology: An Introduction* (2000); Linda Finlay's *Phenomenology for Therapists* (2011); and Max van Manen's *Phenomenology of Practice* (2015).

Cesar A. Cruz, 2016. The Phenomenology of a Modern Architect and his Sense of Place: Henry Klumb's Residential Architecture in Puerto Rico, 1944–1975. Doctoral dissertation, Architecture, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

From the abstract: "In this dissertation, the author examines the evolution and architectural implications of one architect's sense of place. The architect **Heinrich "Henry" Klumb** (1905–1984) was a German immigrant, a one-time associate of Frank Lloyd Wright, and for forty years a prolific and celebrated modern architect on the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico.

"The author uses his own conceptions of place thinking, place making, and impressing a sense of place to trace the pivotal elements that shaped Klumb's sense of place from when he emigrated from Cologne, Germany in 1927, through his seventeen year sojourn in the United States, on to his long career in Puerto Rico. The author then relates how Klumb's sense of place found direct, physical expressions in the houses that he designed and built in Puerto Rico.

"Central to the author's theoretical framework and research methods was David Seamon's multifaceted concept of phenomenological ecology, as espoused by Seamon, Ed Relph, Jeff Malpas, and other phenomenological thinkers and writers."

Tonino Griffero, 2017. *Quasi-Things: The Paradigm of Atmospheres*. Albany, NY: State Univ. of New York Press.

Author of *Atmospheres* (see *EAP*, Fall 2015), this philosopher continues his aesthetic exploration of *atmosphere*, which here he identifies as a "quasi-thing" and defines as "an object of natural perception

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but filtered through the ideas and evaluations of the perceiver and an invitation that can be changed or partly declined. So in most cases in our everyday life, atmospheres exist 'between' the object and the subject" (pp. xiv–xv). Originally published in Italian in 2013 as *Quasi-cose. La realtà dei sentimenti*. See sidebar, below.

Some features of atmospheres as quasi-things

1. An atmosphere can overwhelm us and be refractory to a more or less conscious attempt at a projective reinterpretation.
2. An atmosphere can find us in tune with it to the point that we don't realize we entered it.
3. An atmosphere may not reach the necessary threshold for sensorial-affective observation, thus causing an embarrassing atmospheric inadequacy for oneself and for others.
4. An atmosphere may be perceived differently in the course of time.
5. An atmosphere may be so dependent on the perceptual form that it concretizes itself even in materials that normally express other moods (adapted from Griffero 2017, p. xiv).

Jürgen Hasse, 2014. Atmospheres as Expressions of Medial Power. *Lebenswelt*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 214–29.

From the introduction: "Atmospheres are ubiquitous phenomena. They give a feel of what cannot be easily explicated in words. Especially in cities, atmospheres are subject to rapid change; they are situated next to each other, lie on one another and adhere to places as well as to situations."

Jon A. Sanford, 2012. *Universal Design as a Rehabilitation Strategy: Design for the Ages.* NY: Springer.

The architect discusses "the significance and impact of universal design as a change agent for social and health movements. The focus is how universal design "can promote increased performance and participation for the gaining population and people with disabilities while mitigating the sigma and segregation that often characterize traditional rehabilitation design strategies."

Edward Steinfeld & Jordana L. Maisel, 2012. *Universal Design: Creating Inclusive Environments.* NY: Wiley.

These architects provide a "comprehensive survey of best practices and innovative solutions in universal design." The authors provide an accessible history of universal design and UD strategies for housing, interior design, product design, transportation, and urban and landscape design. The book includes a perceptive first chapter on "barriers and their social meaning." The authors write: "Universal design is about dealing with barriers as artists or scientists would. It demands creative thinking and a change in perspective. It is not sufficient merely to apply design criteria in accessibility regulations in a mechanistic way. Often a change in perspective is needed." See sidebar, below

Ramps and Frank Lloyd Wright

There have always been designers thinking creatively about removing barriers. The Guggenheim Museum in New York City is an early example of universal design. We usually think of building ramps to connect two levels, but Frank Lloyd Wright had a new perspective on ramps. He ramped the building itself. Reportedly, he was inspired by his dislike of museums that took a great deal of effort to visit. He thought every museum visitor could benefit by taking the elevator to the top of the building and then effortlessly gliding down the ramp to observe the art work along the way (Steinfeld & Maisel 2012, p. 123).

Lester Embree (1938–2017)

Phenomenology advocate **Lester Embree**, 79, passed away on January 19, 2017, in Boca Raton, Florida. He was Professor of Philosophy at Florida Atlantic University and received his Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research in 1972. He did his doctoral work with philosopher **Aron Gurwitsch** and had taken classes with philosopher **Dorion Cairns**. Embree was instrumental in setting up the archives for the papers and files of, among others, **Alfred Schutz**, Aron Gurwitsch, and Dorion Cairns. He was a prolific scholar, having published five book-length investigations, 94 book chapters, 89 interpretive essays, 46 edited books, and 31 edited works of other authors.

Embree served on the boards of 35 phenomenological societies and belonged to 20 philosophical societies. One of his great services was to foster the growth of phenomenological organizations worldwide, and he was frequently involved in the beginnings of such organizations, such as Duquesne University's Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology, the Organization of Phenomenological Organizations, the Husserl Circle, the Central and European Conference in Phenomenology, the Nordic Society for Phenomenology, Phenomenology for the East Asia Circle, the Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences, and the International Alfred Schutz Circle for Phenomenology and Interpretive Social Science. He was instrumental in establishing two book series, "Contributions to Phenomenology" (Springer) and the "Series in Continental Thought" (Ohio State Univ. Press).

Embree was a great entrepreneur for phenomenology, always imagining and realizing new phenomenological projects and setting up new organizations. His service to phenomenology included encouraging the practice of phenomenological method, fostering multidisciplinary engagement, mentoring a generation of younger phenomenology scholars, and helping the tradition of phenomenology to flourish across cultures.

Starting in the early 1980s, Embree inspired work in environmental and architectural phenomenology. He was an early booster of *EAP* and encouraged environmental and architectural researchers to participate in phenomenology conferences, particularly the Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences (SPHS).

*The editor thanks **Michael Barber** for permission to draw on the obituary he wrote for Embree.*

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Remembering Anne Buttimer (1938–2017)

David Seamon

[W]e need to evaluate our modes of knowing in the light of modes of being in the everyday world…. Ideally, phenomenology should allow lifeworld to reveal itself in its own terms (Anne Buttimer 1976, p. 277).

Geographer **Anne Buttimer**, 78, died in her home country of Ireland on July 15, 2017. Like geographers **Yi-Fu Tuan** and **Edward Relph**, she played a major role in introducing phenomenological principles, concepts, and methods to the discipline of geography. Collectively, this body of work came to be called "humanistic geography," though all three thinkers questioned this label in various ways.

I first met Anne at Clark University's Graduate School of Geography, where we both arrived at the same time—fall, 1970. She was an energetic post-doctoral fellow who had been conducting research on urban social space in Glasgow, Scotland; I was a naïve, first-semester graduate student, quite lost in making the intellectual transition from undergraduate to graduate learning.

Very quickly, I chose Anne as my dissertation advisor. I say without reservation that, without her supportive presence at Clark, I would never have completed my doctorate. At that time, quantitative methods dominated the discipline, and Anne was one of the few faculty willing to sponsor research that would move in qualitative, interpretive directions, including a recognition of the value of phenomenological and hermeneutic perspectives in understanding environmental and place topics [1].

I vividly remember first encountering Anne in a fall seminar in "psycho-geography," taught by Clark psychologist and geographer **David Stea**. Because of Anne's remarkably youthful appearance, I first mistook her as a Clark undergraduate. I was flabbergasted that a person so young could be so articulate and know so much.

At the time, the two largest graduate programs at Clark were geography and psychology. These departments were attempting an interdisciplinary doctoral degree, in which I quickly became involved. Anne was an important contributor to this effort because of her work in introducing qualitative approaches to environment-behavior (E-B) research. By 1970, she had already recognized the potential contribution that a phenomenological perspective could contribute to such E-B topics as spatial behavior, cognitive mapping, environmental wayfinding, and human territoriality.

That first year at Clark, Anne was immersed in writing her article, "Social Space and the Planning of Residential Areas," which would appear in a 1972 issue of *Environment and Behavior* (Buttimer 1972). Superbly innovative at the time, this article remains an insightful venue for conceptualizing and evaluating urban residential experiences and behaviors.

The article was unusual because it drew on three contrasting urban-research literatures and integrated them into a conception that Anne called the "urban social space model." This model incorporated, first, urban territoriality, identified as "home grounds"; second, typical movement patterns, identified as "activity spaces"; and, third, residents' urban cognitive representations, identified as personal and collective "images."

As she worked on this article, however, she spoke of her growing frustration with conventional E-B concepts and theories that she felt too often misread phenomenon and reduced them to piecemeal understandings unfair to the rich complexity of human life. Before her Glasgow work, Anne had studied at the Husserl archives in Belgium; by 1972, she was thinking about ways to bring forth continental thinking into geography. This pondering led to her 1974 *Values in Geography*, one of the earliest efforts to demonstrate the value of existentialism and phenomenology to geographical research (Buttimer 1974).

Perhaps her most influential contribution to environmental and architectural phenomenology is the 1976 article, "Grasping the Dynamism of Lifeworld," which appeared in a special issue of the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (Buttimer 1976). This paper is a milestone in phenomenological and environmental thought because Anne argued that both environmental and phenomenological thinking were incomplete. She pointed out that phenomenologists rarely considered the crucial significance of environments, spaces, and places in their explications of human experience, just as environmental thinkers rarely considered the lived dimensions of environmental understandings and actions. An excerpt from this article is included on pp. 6–7.

By the late 1970s, Anne had become interested in the creative process, including its relation to intellectual and scholarly endeavor. This new area of research arose partly via a fruitful "academic leave of absence" in the mid-1970s when she was a visiting professor at Lund University and became intrigued by the "time-space geography" of eminent Swedish geographer Torsten Hägerstrand.

This new focus on academic creativity moved her research and writing efforts into the "Dialogue Project," which produced a series of interviews and writings exploring the nature of creative insight and thinking for geographers and other environmental thinkers. These studies and the many interviews that Anne produced during that time have become an important contribution to the historiography of geography specifically and to environmental thought more broadly. Anne's work of this period offers significant insight into how "a scholarship of discovery" proceeds conceptually and practically (Buttimer 1983).

What always struck me most about Anne's professional style was her unstinting effort to draw on and integrate any and all work that might have relation to her substantive research and scholarly interests. At Clark in the 1970s, she played a key role in facilitating dialogue between the university's geographers and psychologists, who often saw little value in understanding each other's vastly differing

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points of view. She also brought in sociologists and students of literature to explore the topic of peoples' lived relationships with place. She insisted that graduate students participate in these discussions and regularly scheduled formal academic events and informal "parties" to bring these varied constituencies together.

The fruitful results of her knack for academic and professional integration are seen in her writings, which make as much reference to other disciplines and professions as to her home discipline of geography. Whenever an idea arose that seemed potentially useful for her own particular research concern at the time, she would master that idea and transform its possibilities into geographical language (the example that had the most personal impact for me was her enthusiastic environmental and place extension of Husserl's concepts of lifeworld and natural attitude).

As far as I know, Anne's last published work is the chapter she prepared for phenomenological philosopher Janet Donohoe's recent edited collection, *Place and Phenomenology* (see p. 1), to which I also contributed a chapter. Anne's entry, "Nature, Space, and Place," returns her efforts to an aim that she long held central to geographic research and practice—drawing on clear thinking and reverential sensibility to heal the Earth and better human life. It is fitting that this last work appears in a volume on the phenomenology of place. We provide an excerpt from this chapter on p. 7.

Note

1. For a first-person account of her time at Clark, see Buttimer 1987; Buttimer and Seamon 1980. On her life and work, see T. Mels, "Anne Buttimer," in P. Hubbard and R. Kitchin, eds. *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, 2nd edition. London: Sage, 2011, pp. 91–97. Many of Buttimer's writings are available at https://independent.academia.edu/AnneButtimer.

Anne Buttimer: Some Key Works

1969. Social Space in Interdisciplinary Perspective, *Geographical Review*, 59: 417–26.

1971a. *Society and Milieu in the French Geographic Tradition* [Association of American Geographers Monograph 6]. New York: Rand McNally.

1971b. Sociology and Planning, *Town Planning Review*, 42: 145–80.

1972. Social Space and the Planning of Residential Areas, *Environment and Behavior*, 4: 279–318 [reprinted in A. Buttimer and D. Seamon, eds., 1980, *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, London: Croom Helm, pp. 21–54].

1974. *Values in Geography*. Washington, DC: Assoc. of American Geographers.

1976. Grasping the Dynamism of Lifeworld, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66: 277-92.

1980. Home, Reach, and the Sense of Place, in Anne Buttimer and David Seamon, eds., *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, London: Croom Helm, pp. 166–87.

1983. *Creativity and Context*. Lund: Lund University Press.

1987. A Social Topology of Home and Horizon, *Journal of Environmental Psychology* [special issue on environment-behavior research at Clark University, 1969–1978], 7: 307–19.

1993. *Geography and the Human Spirit*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

2001. *Sustainable Landscapes and Lifeways: Scale and Appropriateness*. Cork: Cork University Press.

2017. Nature, Place, and the Sacred. In Janet Donohoe, ed., *Place and Phenomenology*. NY: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 59–74.

From "Grasping the Dynamism of Lifeworld" (1976)

Anne Buttimer

Recent attempts by geographers to explore the human experience of space have focused on overt behavior and cognitive foundations. The language and style of our descriptions, however, often fail to speak in categories appropriate for the elucidation of lived experience, and we need to evaluate our modes of knowing in the light of modes of being in the everyday world.

Phenomenologists provide guidelines for this task. They point to the preconsciously-given aspects of behavior and perception residing in the "lifeworld"—the culturally defined spatiotemporal setting or horizon of everyday life. Scientific procedures that separate "subjects" and "objects," thought and action, people and environments are inadequate to investigate lifeworlds. Ideally, phenomenology should allow lifeworld to reveal itself in its own terms.

In practice, however, phenomenological descriptions remain opaque to the functional dynamism of spatial systems, just as geographical descriptions of space have neglected many facets of human experience. There are certain avenues for dialogue between these two disciplines in three major research areas: the sense of place, social space, and time-space rhythms. Such a dialogue could contribute to a more humanistic foundation for human geography (p. 277).

The Sense of Place

The coincidence of social and spatial identification within a region was exemplified particularly in early twentieth century studies of French *pays* [cultural regions]. Though physiographic boundaries were emphasized, the pattern of living (*genre de vie*) shaped and was shaped by place. Technological and economic changes in genres de vie opened people's horizons toward wider interaction networks, but did not always undermine the sense of place; even technologically sophisticated and urban populations have territorial identification. In recent years, much research has focused on territoriality and proxemics behavior, and much insight has been gleaned into the organic, cognitive, affective, and symbolic foundations of identification with place.

Phenomenologists have corroborated many of these results in their essays on lived space and existential space…. In many respects, geography and phenomenology have arrived at similar conclusions about the experience of place. The routes of their investigations are different, however, and hence they offer valuable critical insight into one another. The phenomenologist notes that a social scientist using a priori disciplinary models to investigate experience may fail to

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tap direct experience. The social scientist may object to the tendency in phenomenology to universalize about human experience from individual accounts.

A geographer would be justifiably skeptical about some of the generalizations that have been propounded about lived space. The ideal person described by phenomenologists appears to be rural (at least "local") at heart; non-place-based social networks do not seriously influence his knowledge of space, or his attractions or repulsions from places. Surely a person could be psychological present in distant spaces and milieu: places inhabited by loved ones, or milieux rendered vivid through literary or visual media. Does "home" always coincide with residence? Could a person be "at home" in several places, or in no place? Could the gestalt or coherent pattern of one's life space not emerge from mobility as a kind of topological surface punctuated by specific anchoring points?

A more serious objection could be raised concerning the implicit assumption in some phenomenological writing that the human person is in charge, and that space and milieu are silent, or simply a kind of screen onto which a person may project his intentions….

Some phenomenological study does emphasize the dialogical nature of people's relationship to place. Eliade's distinctions between sacred and profane space; Bachelard's illustrations of poetic modes of construing nature, place, and time; and Heidegger's notion of "dwelling" give an overall impression of ambiguity. Phenomenologists affirm theoretically that environments ("world") play a dynamic role in human experience but, often in practice, they implicitly subsume such dynamism within a dialogue in which human agents ascribe meaning and significance. Geographers would be more inclined to ascribe a dynamism of their own to such external conditions as ecosystems, linkage patterns, and economies.

Overriding these differences in style and orientation emerges the sense of lifeworld as preconsciously-given facets of everyday place experience. One returns to the notion of genre de view, and the routinely accepted patterns of behavior and intention. From both geography and phenomenology, the notion of rhythm emerges: everyday behavior demonstrates a quest for order, predictability, and routine, as well as the quest for adventure and change. The everyday lifeworld, viewed from the vantage point of place, could be seen as a tension (orchestration) of stabilizing and innovative forces, many of which may not be consciously grasped until stress or illness betrays some disharmony between person and world. This tension between stability and change within rhythms of different scales, expressed by the body's relationship to its world, may be seen as prototype of the relationship between places and space, home and range in the human experience of the world (pp. 283–85).

From "Nature, Place, and the Sacred" (2017)

Anne Buttimer

Zu den Sachen ["to the things themselves"] was a fundamental Husserlian slogan for phenomenology. Its central purpose was to evoke consciousness of the "filters" through which reality was perceived and known in the generally taken-for-granted worlds of science and society….

Western distinctions/separations of nature and culture, of knowledge and being, truth and goodness, science and mortality, may have blocked important insights into taken-for-granted aspects of lived reality. Could phenomenological reflections on nature and place uncover some of these hidden *epochés?*

Throughout the highways and byways of my home country [of Ireland], the identities of place are associated with shrines, holy wells, pilgrimages sites, and lakes. While many display symbols of Christian saints and Gospel events, many date back to pre-Christian times. There may be other cultures where similar identities with water and place are taken for granted. Given today's urgent challenge for cross-cultural understanding in the global attempt to rediscover more sustainable ways of life, surely a global sharing of insights on sacredness in nature and place would be timely…. (pp. 59–60).

In art and architecture, liturgy and law, ceremony and creed, taken-for-granted religious practices in various places in the world reflect the natural environments and ways of life in which they emerged. Re-acknowledging the importance of place and the sacred in shaping the ways whereby humanity relates to planet Earth and designs the spatial organization of its activities and habitat is long overdue.

Consider the enormous impact of ventures undertaken by charismatic twentieth-century leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and many others, who appealed to both faith and reason in their pursuit of their ideals. "We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds," Wandari Maathai proclaimed as she received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2004, "and in the process heal our own." Her Green Belt Movement, which has already witnessed the planting of thirty million trees by women on the African continent, offers a shining ray of hope. What better evidence could one find for proclaiming the essential bonds of faith, place, and creativity?

As Isaac Newton acknowledged at the end of his life: "I have felt like a little boy playing at the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

Phenomenological reflections on nature, place, and the sacred today might well reveal ways to improve communication and mutual understanding among diverse cultural worlds, among diverse fields of expertise, and pave the way for wiser ways of dwelling on planet Earth (p. 71).

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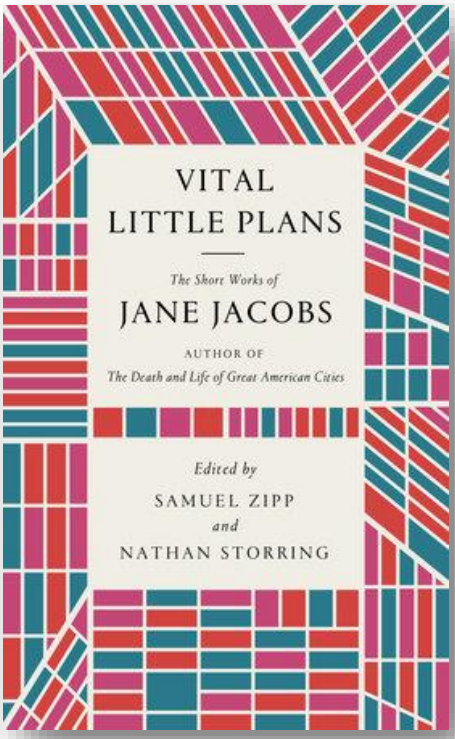
Book Note

Jane Jacobs, 2016. *Vital Little Plans: The Short Works of Jane Jacobs,* Samuel Zipp and Nathan Storring, editors. NY: Random House.



This edited volume of **Jane Jacobs'** lesser known writings is more encouraging evidence that her remarkable understandings of the city and economics-in-place will play an important conceptual and practical role in early-21st century thinking on the nature of citiness and vibrant urban economies.

Since 2000, a spate of books and edited volumes have demonstrated the extraordinary importance of Jacobs's ideas, including, most recently, **Robert Kanigel's** biography, *Eyes on the Street: The Life of Jane Jacobs* (2016); and **Peter Laurence's** *Becoming Jane Jacobs* (2015), an account of the creation of her best known work, *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (for a review of Laurence's book and a list of recent works about Jacobs, see the winter/spring 2016 issue of *EAP*).

Most of the 37 entries in *Vital Little Plans* have not before been published. The editors have selected little-known articles, lectures, and portions of two books that Jacobs left unfinished when she died in 2006—*Uncovering the Economy: A New Hypothesis*; and *A Short Biography of the Human Race.* The editors have organized these entries chronologically around four broad periods marking significant themes in Jacobs' thinking: Part I: A City Naturalist, 1934–1952; Part II: City Building, 1952–1965; Part III: How New Work Begins, 1965–1984; and Part IV: The Ecology of Cities, 1984–2000. The editor introductions to these four parts provide helpful background and context. In sum, this collection is a valuable addition to Jacobs' extraordinary oeuvre.

In the sidebars right and next page, we include, first, Jacobs' discussion of the importance of neighborhood centers, a topic she highlighted in "Time and Change as Neighborhood Allies," a speech she gave in Washington, DC, when accepting the 2000 Vincent Scully Architecture Prize. In this presentation, she identifies four frequent failures of city neighborhoods—wrongs ways of assimilating immigrants; weak neighborhood centers; excessive gentrification; and the neighborhood havoc wreaked by excessive rents, whether residential or commercial. For each, she suggests counters, and here we present her discussion of weak neighborhood centers—"hearts," as she intriguingly calls them—and how they might be envisioned or revitalized.

The second sidebar includes a short portion of a much longer interview conducted by Canadian journalist **David Warren**, who asks Jacobs if her way of thinking and writing have changed over the years. Her response is interesting phenomenologically because she emphasizes that she never fully understands what she's thinking until she writes that thinking out. Also, she emphasizes that her way of understanding often arises spontaneously, a way of "seeing that reminds one of Herbert Spiegelberg's definition of phenomenology as the "pristine innocence of first seeing."

"Living, breathing, community hearts"

My second suggestion has to do with communities' needs for hearts or centers and with a related problem: damage done to neighborhoods by commercial incursions where they are inappropriate….

Much thought goes into designing [a center] for new communities and inserting them into neighborhoods that have lost community hearts or never had them. The object is to nurture locales where people on foot will naturally encounter one another in the course of shopping, doing other errands, promoting their causes, airing their grievances, catching up with gossip, and perhaps enjoying a coffee or beer under pretty colored umbrellas.

Let's think a minute about the natural anatomy of community hearts. Wherever they develop spontaneously, they are almost invariably consequences of two or more intersecting streets, well used by pedestrians. On the most meager scale, we have the cliché of the corner store or the corner pub that is recognized as a local hangout. In this cliché, "corner" is a significant adjective. Corner implies two streets interesting in the shape of an X or a T. In traditional towns, the spot recognized as the center of things surprisingly often contains a triangular piece of ground. This is because it is where three main routes converge in the shape of a Y….

Large cities, of course, have typically developed not only localized neighborhood or district hearts, but one or several major hearts, and these also have almost invariably located them-

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selves at busy pedestrian street intersections. All but the very smallest hearts—the corner store—typically provided splendid sites for landmark buildings, public squares, or small parks.

The converse logic doesn't work. Living, beating community hearts can't be arbitrarily located, as if they were suburban shopping centers for which the supporting anatomy is a parking lot and perhaps a transit stop. But given the anatomy of well-used pedestrian main streets, hearts locate themselves; in fact, they can't be prevented from locating themselves….

Now for the related problem of commercial or institutional facilities intruding into inappropriate places…. In cities, successful hearts attract users from outside the neighborhood, and they also attract entrepreneurs who want to be where the action is. These things happen. In fact, if these things didn't happen, cities would be little more advantageous economically and socially than villages; they wouldn't generate urban surprise, pizzazz, and diversity.

So with time and change, originally unforeseen commercial and institutional overflows can occur in city neighborhoods. Where do they go? They may have to find and convert makeshift quarters. Occasionally, the makeshifts are delightful, but most commonly they register as ugly, jarring, intrusive smears in residential streets where they were never meant to intrude. Watching this happen, people think, "This neighborhood is going to the dogs"…. So much is this form of deterioration disliked and feared, that one of the chief purposes of zoning regulations is to prevent it.

Here is where the anatomy of natural neighborhood hearts can come to the rescue. One important adaptive advantage of open-ended main pedestrian streets forming intersections is that these streets are logical places to locate convertible buildings before there is a need to convert them. They can be a designed form of neighborhood insurance, so to speak.

For example, row houses can be designed to convert easily and pleasantly to shops, small offices, studios, restaurants, all kinds of things. Several joined together even convert well to small schools and other institutions. And of course many buildings originally put up for work, especially loft buildings, covert pleasantly to apartments or living-and-working combinations.

In sum, I am suggesting that urban designers and municipalities should not think about the street anatomy without also providing or encouraging easily convertible buildings on those streets as opportunity to do that arises. This is a practical strategy for dealing with time and change as allies, not enemies (pp. 254–357).

"A state of confusion"

Warren [interviewer]: Has the way you work changed over the years?

Jacobs: No, it hasn't changed, and that is one reason why I'm slow. When I start a book, I have an idea, but it is not well developed. I don't know what I'm looking for, and by the end I find that I haven't written the book I expected because my ideas have changed. If I had known what I was getting into I would never have gotten in. There are so many more ramifications and clues and keys to things that you can't anticipate. Since I don't really know what I'm doing when I start, I read as omnivorously as I can, and listen to people, and look at things. It is a state of great confusion.

But I've learned to trust myself about what is interesting because so often I'd be interested in something but would consider it beside the point. I would say to myself, "Come on, get back to work," and throw this thing away, try to put it out of my mind. And then I would find later that I needed exactly that thing. It was germane. I've learned to trust myself—if I'm interested in something, to regard it as of potential value.

I just keep on, despite confusion, and I often try writing at an early stage because writing is, for me, a rigorous form of thinking. When you put things down on those blank sheets of paper, you find the holes in what you suppose.

I do a lot of drafts and a lot of discarding, and often realize that my organization is wrong, that very important things must be told *before* what I thought I could begin with. In *The Economy of Cities*, I was going to begin with what turned out to be the fifth chapter. Every time I wrote I would start digressing, and when you digress so much, something is wrong with your organization. What was wrong was that my digressions were essential, but bad initial organization forced their displacement.

Warren: This is what every original thinker must do. Flounder.

Jacobs: The one thing I haven't told you is that, in the midst of this confusion, I am always tempted to throw everything I have into one of those green garbage bags and get rid of it. I get in such despair sometimes. It is so uncomfortable to be in this confusion, but there are two reasons why I don't throw it all away. What else would I do then? Also, I'll always begin in this confusion if I don't work it out. So I don't throw it away. I just keep on…. [I]t's worse to stop than to keep on. Certain patterns begin to announce themselves. It's not that I think them up; I'm not consciously thinking about them. Whish! There they are and that's exciting.

Warren: But it was you who spotted them.

Jacobs: They were there all the time, but I didn't spot them until a certain point. I'm very slow and full of trial and error and plodding and I wish I knew some faster, more efficient way to work, but experience hasn't taught me any (pp. 317–319).

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My Spirituality of Place

Robert Barzan

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When someone asks me my ethnicity, I respond that I am a Californian. I have lived in California most of my life, and it is this place that makes me who I am. I am formed by the years of drought, by the blossoming of California poppies, by earthquakes and wild fires, by the smoggy skies and car-dominated cities. California is where I go through the cycles of nature, including the human cycles. My California identity comes through the mixing of Italian, Canadian, Native American, Mexican, Chinese, and other cultures. My life is influenced by the behavior and thinking of all kinds of people whose lives intersect with my own in California.

More precisely, I live in Modesto in the northern San Joaquin Valley, a part of California similar to and different from all other parts of the state. Though I was born in another country, have been a citizen of three countries, and lived in a dozen cities, I embrace this place because I want to be aware of how living here influences both who I am, for good or bad, and how happy I am.

Wherever I live, even when I know I will live there for only a short time, I try to develop an attitude of reverence, a respect not just for all the residents, human and non-human, but also for the inanimate beings that make up that place. This means I learn the local history and mythology. In one place, I did a history of the ownership of the land on which I lived. I study the natural history, the flora, fauna, and geology of the region. I walk everywhere. I engage in activities that I think connect me to the human and non-human community. I savor the sensuality of the place, its smells, sights, tastes, and sounds.

As much as I can, I enjoy the time and the place. This intimacy is important because it informs a way of living that promotes my own wellbeing and the wellbeing of the community.

It is primarily in California that I am learning to be a moral and spiritual person. On one hand, every action I take, every experience that comes my way or that I initiate is an opportunity to be more compassionate, generous, and kind and to partake in behaviors that strengthen the wellbeing of the human and non-human community. On the other hand, these same situations can trigger hate, intolerance, greed, and other behaviors that diminish my wellbeing and the wellbeing of my community.

My day-to-day California experience is the first of three pillars that are the foundation of my spirituality. In religions, spirituality is usually based on some combination of revelation, authority, and tradition. I rely on the interaction of experience, reflection, and evidence for guidance and encouragement in my non-religious spirituality.

Years ago, when I was a Jesuit, I learned the second of the three pillars, examining the experiences of the day in light of my value system. Over my life, I have created, fine-tuned, and made a commitment to a value system that I think is life-giving for me and my community. My values are the standard against which I evaluate and judge my behavior.

This is not just a personal reflection but one with a community dimension. I consult my close friends, the people I have built a relationship with over many years. They know me and are best suited to give me wise feedback and direction about my behavior and values.

If there is an event to which I think I could have responded better, I consider how I might have acted differently. Sometimes, I imagine myself in the event again, only this time responding more in line with my ideals. This imagining helps me change my behavior for the future and is an essential part of my reflection.

I try to be open to new information, to change, to diversity, and to new interpretations. In my thinking and reflection, I include contemporary knowledge of environmental science, biology, ecology, evolution, human neuroscience, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, all the sciences and humanities including the arts.

The third pillar involves how I know if my efforts are working. What evidence do I look for that I am on the right track and that my values are healthy? One way is to see how I relate to other people and to all of nature. I know that I need to change my behavior or my values if I find hate, intolerance, greed, fear, envy, jealousy, waste, injustice, discrimination, or a lack of compassion in my life.

If the evidence indicates behavior that is loving, compassionate, truthful, generous, considerate, forgiving, and peaceful, then I know where I want to be. I look for the wellbeing of others and myself, and I look to my friends for confirmation and encouragement. Another key piece of evidence is whether or not I am joyful, even having fun, in how I live my life.

The interaction of experience, reflection, and evidence puts the focus on my behavior and on outcomes in real time and place so that my spirituality is embedded in reality and not just an ideal. I make mistakes, but for me, this is a fulfilling way to live. Experience, reflection, and evidence help me use my own intelligence and creativity and the multi-faceted intelligence and creativity of my community in my efforts to realize my own wellbeing and the wellbeing of the community.

For me, this is what spirituality is all about.

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Reflections from Bhutan on the "-ness" in place-ness

Jenny Quillien

Quillien *has recently switched from an academic life in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to private industry in Amsterdam, Holland. Her abiding interest in "place studies" has led her to phenomenology, space syntax, Christopher Alexander's "patterns," and a current focus on workspace design. Her books include* Clever Digs: How Workspaces Enable Thought *(2011); and* Delight's Muse: On Christopher Alexander's Nature of Order *(2010).* *See p. 13 for photograph captions.*

Manhattan-*ness*. New Orleans-*ness*. Paris-*ness*. my home-*ness*. your office-*ness*. The "-*ness*" ineffable and yet so present-thick-in-the-air-almost-tangible-quality of life in certain places. This "-ness" is what we love (or possibly hate) and, as place makers, aspire to create, preserve, or change.

Bhutan, a small mountain country wedged between India and Tibetan China, is not only utterly idiosyncratic in its "-ness" but utterly unusual in its deliberate path to develop its "-ness." A 16-day visit provoked the following question and (partial) answer: Using Bhutan as a case study, can we come closer to understanding place-ness, its nature, how it evolves, and its power to affect? [1].

"-ness" as natural consequence

The "-ness" of a place can simply be the natural consequence of multiple ingrained self-reinforcing patterns over time.

In the case of Bhutan, geography provides, quite literally, the bedrock of "-ness." The country is tiny (about half the size of the U.S. state of Indiana), but it is also huge if we flattened all those mountains and then measured. Landscape photography doesn't really help much. Imagine you were a speck of a weevil navigating the head of a cauliflower. The mountains are tightly packed with few valleys floors and no good passes either. Be it on a footpath, mule-train track, or on one of the rare, landslide-prone, single-lane, paved roads—all movement can only monotonously switch slowly back and forth and up and down along hairpin turns.

At the valley bottoms are grown pineapple and mango; up a tad farther, rice and chilies; then apples and pears; potatoes and onions; and, highest up, buckwheat, cattle, and yak. The northern top third of the country has no roads at all and buffers against Tibet with glaciers. On the south rim of this cauliflower blob, you fall out of the hills with a thud onto the hot mosquito flats of Assam.

Physical isolation and time gave Bhutan a remarkably distinctive coherence. Different peoples slowly wiggled their way into crevices, but the survival problems posed by shared geography gave rise to similar solutions: terraced farming and seasonal grazing, wood and rammed earth construction, large habitations for extended family (typically 10 to 20 people together), homemade clothing and tools, and feudal social structure.

Time allowed for significant amalgamation. Bhutan has enjoyed internal political peace since the seventeenth century under a benign monarchy. Since the eighth century, the country has been devoutly Buddhist. Buddhism, the all-encompassing envelope: worldview, value system, and code of conduct.

Physical cues of Buddhist life abound. There is a gentle soundscape of prayer that laps against the ears like an oceanic motherload: the *flap flap snap, flap flap snap* of prayer flags in the breeze; mountain springs turning water wheels for prayer; drumming and chants sounding from the many monasteries. Visual reminders come in the form of stupas and the ever-present red robed monks providing administrative and spiritual guidance. No colonial power ever got the best of Bhutan. Actually, no colonial power ever bothered to try.

"-ness" as product

Beyond this more passive "-ness," Bhutan offers an example of pro-active and forward looking governance that has taken the historic unself-conscious "-ness" as raw material and turned it into a deliberate self-conscious result.

Bhutan wants to modernize on its own terms but comes to development late in the game and from far behind. Static and feudal in structure, serfdom was abolished only in 1958. If we take 1958 as a marker date, there were no paved roads, no hospitals, no postal service, no schooling outside of monasteries. Leprosy was a problem until 2000.

The miracle started with a series of kings (father to son) all bright, all benevolent, all deeply Buddhist who wanted to jump-start an unfolding, an opening of internal possibilities, that would allow Bhutan to preserve its core identity but become "developed." These kings retained the monarchy and engaged personal involvement as stewards but turned a democratic process over to the people. Bottom up.

Demographically, this is possible. Bhutan supports a steady population of just 700,000. The capital, Thimphu, has a population of 100,000; a half-dozen other towns have populations of 30,000; the rest

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of the population lives mostly in villages. The towns and villages discuss issues and send requests to a higher parliamentary level that in turn forwards requests to a small group of ministers. Political instruction from the kings is clear: What *must* animate political debate are the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold Path to Enlightenment.

Without attempting a full course on Buddhism, let's at least note the First Noble Truth about *dukka*. Most frequently translated as "suffering," *dukka* literally means "not enough-ness." Buddhism teaches that one's *dukka* is illusionary, self-induced, and can be un-induced. In Western terms, "Get over it" and "let go." Consider, just contemplate for a moment, what that teaching does to capitalism. Is not marketing based on fanning the flames of our *dukka* tendencies?

Want a date? Haven't got a date? Are you inferior? Maybe it's body odor. Buy Dial soap.

In the 1970s, the fourth king of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, rejected *Gross Domestic Product* as the standard measurement of national progress and devised instead a *Gross National Happiness* based on four pillars: economic self-reliance, good governance, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation and promotion. Decisions resulting from this process included:

- Guaranteeing the rights of animals and plants through the constitution (two-thirds of Bhutan must remain under pristine, untouched forest cover).
- Spending wisely and frugally on basic infrastructure, education, and health.
- Maintaining traditional aesthetics in language, dress, house form, and village layout.
- Avoiding involvement with such imperialistic establishments as the World Trade Organization (thus no "invasion" by McDonalds, Kentucky Fried, or Walmart).
- Outlawing tobacco, ex-pat communities, and proselytizing (one can be of any religious tradition, but no missionaries are allowed) [2].

I don't want to paint an overly romantic picture of Bhutan. It's not all so pure, pure, pure. For example, Buddhists aren't supposed to kill. Nobody wants to be a butcher. They don't even fish the trout streams. The truth is, however, they all like meat. The solution comes in the form of trucks from India swapping cash crops of potatoes and apples for frozen chicken and pork. High ranking religious figures scold about such hypocrisy, but meat consumption continues. Tuesday is supposed to be dry day at the bars but, that too, is lax.

Nonetheless, the results are remarkable. Bhutan-ness (undefinable in a tidy way, just as all "-nesses" elude tight definition) attracts such qualifiers as "immediately recognizable," "collective in a loose sort of way" (solitary volunteer English teachers from Canada are pitied), "relaxed about protocols," "skilled about survival" (only basic tools and few interfaces between self and nature), "parochial," "place-centered," "self-referential," "solid in faith," "hardy," "ready for a laugh," "undemanding," "accepting of life's circumstances," "accommodating," "trusting," "live and let live," "gentle."

"-ness" as driving force

It is easy to see that "-ness" as end result (either of naturally occurring forces or deliberate governance) can loop back and become the motor for self-reinforcement or for change. Take the policy for tourism: *High value, low volume*. The visitor must not only acquire one of a limited number of visas but must also pay $250 per day, an amount that covers guide, driver, accommodations, meals, and still leaves a hefty amount for the national coffers. I was skeptical of this tourism policy and expected lock-step control.

I was wrong. Our guide-interpreter was knowledgeable, but he didn't have a "*shtick*." We went anywhere we wanted. We were relieved to turn over driving on precipice edges to a guy with nerves of steel and an inexhaustible supply of betel nut. Food was simple—fresh and sort of "family Sunday best." Bhutan-ness pervaded the way we were treated.

But more than that. The usual destruction of place from tourism, the claptrap and schlock, was not there. The usual "*tourist-and-local-never-the-twain-shall-meet"* was not there. Taking on only the numbers that the Bhutanese can graciously accommodate meant that we were actually welcomed guests.

Through our guide-interpreter, I was able to chat with people of all ages and walks of life. There weren't so many tourists that we "de-natured" the nature of festivals, markets, and events. At one point, we inadvertently crashed a baby shower but that was fine: we had tea and talked with the great grandmother. In other words, the policy, a deliberate end-result, became an initiating force actively producing experiences that solidified the "-ness" in the context of modern tourism.

As an active agent, Bhutan-ness also began to "work on" other active agents—take me, for example. My first startling wakeup call was the sight of Bhutanese health and vitality: people of normal body weight and sprightly step, no homeless, no beggars [3]. In Bhutan, it took just a few days for me to become lax about locking doors or leaving my backpack around. There was "safety" in the air.

At one festival, a small child came up to sit in my lap, as if all adult laps were good for the taking. I noticed that kids were carried around by both men and women and passed around quite widely. They were clearly growing up with the psychological security of a benevolent world. I'm not Buddhist and wasn't looking for enlightenment, but the gentle, persistent cueing about the larger spiritual picture had an effect. If I walked into a store without other customers, the shopkeeper would most likely be reciting prayers. It began to feel

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natural. Contentment seemed contagious: my *dukka* level was falling.

Actually, the experience is more potent than that. Here I was from secular America, getting my buttons pushed by Buddhadom. For example, when the monks dance they frequently wear the animal-esque masks of the evil spirits: jealousy, covetousness, greed, selfishness. Aren't those evil spirits exactly the same spirits that fuel my world of consumer capitalism? Only Teflon-coated Westerners could take an immersion bath of Bhutan-ness without self-doubt creeping up their spines.

As a side note, only four countries do not have formal diplomatic relationships with the United States: North Korea, Iran, Syria, and Bhutan. Why Bhutan? I don't know. In a curious sort of way, Bhutan-ness, just merely as a possibility, defies the American way of life.

"-ness" as medium

Besides end product and initiating force, less obvious is realizing how "-ness" can be a more subtle medium "through which" something happens.

I'm proposing, first of all, that it is through the "-ness" that the Bhutanese become Bhutanese in a steady-state sort of way. Through the habits of national dress and housing, through taking off and putting on of shoes in places of devotion, through accepting frugal meals of rice and vegetables day after day, the young Bhutanese become molded to behaviors of the land and Buddhist values of peace, non-violence, and watching out for *dukka*.

But, again, in the Bhutanese case, there is a pro-active goal to evolve: to maintain core stability while steadily moving into the modern world. It will be a tough challenge, but "-ness" is the medium for change.

The Bhutanese are loving development. Roads, electricity, shoes. The vast majority of Bhutanese in their 30s today have cell phones *and also remember* growing up with kerosene lamps and wood stoves to stoke on cold mornings. One problem will be in cultivating the maturity necessary to discern the wheat from the chaff coming in from the outside world. There's a lot of useful material, say, on YouTube, along with a lot of trash: alas, it all comes in the same package. Will the value system be strong enough to resist the temptations of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll? [4]

Another problem will be intellectual development. Schooling is taken very seriously, but high civilization and innovation require more. There's no university. The Bhutanese have folk stories and morality tales but no *Literature* with a capital L. There's no *Art*, just a lot of copying of standard religious iconography. There's no home-grown *Music* of any sophistication. It will be so much easier to import than bootstrap from within. Can the Bhutanese muster the necessary "-ness" to carry themselves as themselves into the future?

A high-stakes experiment

I don't know if, in the long run, Bhutan can scout out a viable alternative to the standard road to development and resist the morass of consumerism, but I'd call the experiment one of high stakes.

But what if we just ask about today? How does our own Thomas Jefferson's pursuit of happiness compare with Bhutanese *dukka* training and a sagacious government's eye on the *Global Happiness Index*?

This much I can ascertain. We were in Bhutan for 16 days, and for 16 days I witnessed not a single altercation, nor a single moment of sullenness, sourness, or foot dragging. Across the board, there was good cheer, mutual accommodation, and a ready smile. I can't make it more than 45 minutes in my American town of Santa Fe without seeing somebody ticked off about something.

Notes

1. My understanding of "-ness" as consequence, initiator, and medium is inspired by the work of British philosopher J. G. Bennett; see his *Elementary Systematics: A Tool for Understanding Wholes* (Santa Fe, NM: Bennett Books, 1993).
2. Marijuana grows wild by the roadside but nobody seems to use it. Alcohol was a topic of lively debate and finally allowed on the grounds that drinking is traditional and Bhutan respects its traditions. The Bhutanese now make decent beer, acceptable wine and, of course, *ara*, the traditional rice wines consumed in peculiar recipes. Fried egg floating in hot sake, anyone?
3. I cannot express how, on my return, I was struck by the obesity, alienation, and illness I saw at the San Diego airport.
4. To be more accurate, the current craze isn't rock 'n' roll but South Korean pop music.

Photograph Captions

p. 11: Traditional house: livestock and storage on the ground floor; eating and sleeping above; drying under the roof. Photo by Jenny Quillien.

p. 12: 89-year-old great grandmother lets us crash her party. Photo by Sue Hennegar Hart and used with permission.

p. 13: Growing up safe. Photo by Jenny Quillien

p. 1: Monk dances "Greed." Photo by Jenny Quillien.

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Toward a Place-Responsive Culture

Twelfth Letter from Far South

John Cameron

*Retired environmental educator **John Cameron** lives with his life partner **Vicki King** on Bruny Island, just off the southeastern coast of Tasmania, the island state south of mainland Australia. His first eleven "Letters from Far South" have appeared in* EAP, *winter and fall 2008; spring 2009; winter and fall 2010; spring 2011; winter and fall 2012; spring 2014; fall 2015; and summer/fall 2016. The twelve letters are now available at Amazon.com as a book entitled* Blackstone Chronicles: Place Making on a Tasmanian Island. *A review of the book by **Isis Brook** follows this twelfth letter.* jcameronblackstone@gmail.com. *See p. 21 for image captions.* More *of King's paintings and photographs are available at http://victoriakingplaceart.blogspot.co.uk.*

In *Environmental Culture*, philosopher Val Plumwood takes the discipline of philosophy to task: "Philosophers have mostly been arguing amongst themselves about the applicability to non-humans of highly abstract ethical concepts like intrinsic value and moral considerability without ever getting up the courage to actually investigate or establish specific ethical relationships [with earth others] and thereby evade the real moral task of developing an adequate ethical response to the non-human world" [1]. She broadens the critique by contending that "philosophical tradition, unfortunately, seems to enjoin skepticism of any experience that cannot be immediately conveyed to a rationalist who has never left his armchair" [2].

I am not an academic philosopher, merely someone who has taught an introduction to philosophies of place, but I can testify to the value of actually investigating specific relationships with the more-than-human world. The personal value of such first-hand investigation has been inestimable, and what I understand by "inhabiting a place" has been transformed, but its ultimate, hardest-to-achieve value must be in its contribution to a more place-responsive culture.

When I write of a place called Blackstone now, I mean something far larger in felt sense and in concept than I did when I started these letters nine years ago. The heron, eagles, pardalotes, and some other 70 bird species here; the quolls, wallabies, echidnas and other animals; the grasstrees, prickly box, and white gums; the mushroom-rock formations, the healing waters of the bay, the gentle rain-bearing easterly winds.

Each of these is not a mere place component. They are active presences in their own right. I discovered this when I undertook Goethean scientific investigations that I could in principle extend to every being that is here. I found it out through encounters with the wedge-tailed eagle, quoll, and heron.

Each of these creatures has a distinctive voice that contributes to the exquisite soundscape of Blackstone, constantly in flux. The post-operative requirements of stillness and keeping my eyes closed gave me the opportunity to enter the aural world more fully, and I learned that hearing is a strongly interior mode of perception with different emotional resonances to each sound. If orchestral music is a well-known portal to the emotions, how much more so is the symphony of voices belonging to a beloved place if we care to pay heed? Philosopher David Abram's call for people to learn the local vernacular of their place is an echo of Thoreau's allusion to the tawny grammar, the wild and dusky language of nature.

Inhabiting Blackstone has meant learning how to inhabit my body more fully. Previously, I didn't know how to lift and carry weights, move with an economy of energy across the land, or stay in touch with my musculo-skeletal state through a working day. Physical enmeshment with the land may seem a rarefied concept, but it is actually a down-to-earth process.

The more I've walked over every square yard of the paddocks, bearing a backpack sprayer or young trees and stakes, the more it has become known to my feet and body memory. If I stand at our front doorstep and look up to the slope south of the old pines, this sight is automatically accompanied by the felt sense of being up there, or what it feels like to wade out of the tussocks onto the bare patch of outcrop, or what that place feels like in all kinds of weather.

As with hearing and touch, so with sight. I can no longer take the act of seeing for granted. I am still learning about the choices and consequences of different ways of using my eyes for how I view the world. The vast amount of sensory information flooding our bodies every second may be far in excess of our capacity to comprehend it, but this situation only makes it more important to become as conscious as possible of how our body responds to what surrounds it.

In my classes, I have taught often enough that we are embodied subjects, but it is altogether another matter to experience the

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"body-subject" in communication and communion with the waters of Blackstone Bay and to feel the difference from the customary "I" that is, for example, writing this sentence. It's disconcerting, expansive, enlivening.

A place makes manifest the different time scales working within it. This happens through the medium of stories, which are there for the knowledgeable and imaginative eye to read: Distant volcanoes belching forth ash clouds rich in metals hundreds of millions of years ago; saltwater penetrating fracture zones in the rock thousands of years ago and mobilizing the iron within it. This is "imagination of the real," a far cry from the imagination of the fantasist. It takes the sight of a dead branch of a casuarina lying across a grasstree as the midpoint of a tale of two trees. It brings to life observations about the rising sea level or changes in rock formations on the shoreline.

Places not only reveal stories. They comprise stories, narratively structured as philosopher Jeff Malpas puts it. These are not only the myriad stories of geological and biological evolution, shifting climates, the weathering of rock to make soil, and the migration of plants and animals. Human stories are an integral part of the structure of place. The account of the commissioning of the sod hut by colonial authorities and contact with the Nuenone people coincided with the felling of trees and abuse of the land and wildlife evident on Blackstone. We are now inscribing our own marks as tree plantings and grass cover, just as further chapters of our life stories are being written on Blackstone.

The process of chronicling Blackstone occurrences became an integral part of life, but it quickly became insufficient simply to narrate events. As researchers such as educator Max van Manen emphasize, an essential part of producing a phenomenological account is rewriting, seeking always to cleave to the experience itself [3]. "Is that actually what happened?" "What was it really like, as opposed to what I think it should be like?" These are constant questions for me and frequently expose how I embellish accounts. This awareness often triggers a helpful reciprocity—the more I hone my writing, the closer attention I pay to my experience, the richer my life becomes, thus providing more useful material for reflection and writing.

"Only thus—in the concreteness of the embodied, located, bounded existence—can we come to understand that in which the value and significance of a life is to be found" [4]. Along with physicality and the senses and the narratives within a place, Malpas is saying here that there is value and significance in boundedness. He makes an emphatic statement by beginning with "Only thus," implying there is no avoiding the concreteness of being-in-place if one wishes to have a valuable and significant life.

I have found his claim to be especially true in the apparent paradox between limitation and freedom in living within our ecological means. It has helped me learn the lesson of acceptance by living in a situation where we produce our own electricity and water. I've come to see that a different kind of freedom is unleashed when physical and ecological constraints are accepted.

If one takes Plumwood's challenge to the philosophically-inclined seriously, it is unhelpful to start with the premise of strict separation between the intellect and the body, the human and the non-human [5]. Unfortunately, much of contemporary philosophy adopts that premise, implicitly or explicitly [6].

This is where phenomenology, with its emphasis on human experiencing without any *a priori* assumptions about the world, proves its value. Malpas draws on phenomenological perspectives, as does David Abram. Place phenomenologist David Seamon emphasizes the inseparability of person and world: "a central ontological assumption in phenomenology is that people and their worlds are integrally intertwined. Because of this intricate lived bonding of people and environment, one cannot phenomenologically assign specific phenomena to either human selves or world alone. Rather the two must be conceptualized together as the experienced wholeness of people-in-world" [7].

I've said often that the place has guided my actions, whether it is where to plant trees, when something is out of balance, or how to structure my activities during the day or across the seasons. It would be more accurate to say that Blackstone has offered me invitations to action, some of which I haven't noticed, others I've ignored, but when I have taken them up I have been amply rewarded. "Accept all offers" is Susan Murphy's dictum, and it is particularly applicable to offers from the more-than-human world [8]. "What deeper experience am I being offered by the natural world in this moment? How do I respond?"

I've become more actively receptive and receptively active, entering into a sense of partnership with the land. This has occurred in three main ways: participating with the regenerative forces in the land to create more of a sanctuary for wildlife; openness to chance revelations and serendipity; and joint creative endeavor. The ephemera of life on Blackstone—driftwood, feathers, barbed wire, and bones—have spoken to Vicki, who has transformed them into bird sculptures, bird-women, and spirit figures. The voices of the birds find expression in her poems and my stories.

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Paying close attention to the body-senses has been another important pathway into an intersubjective relationship with Blackstone. Intersubjectivity means granting subject-hood and agency to each species and elements of a place according to their particular characteristics and capacities. Eagles have revealed glimpses of their eagle-ness, grasstrees their grasstree-ness and Mount Wellington its mountain-ness, enough for me to perceive them as creative presences in their own right. It means giving them moral consideration. As Plumwood says, "[S]omeone who lives in a rich interspecies community may often have not only to imagine but to deal with the moral demands and dilemmas of justice and care very similar to the ones that can appear in the human case" [9].

Dilemmas abound on Blackstone. On what basis are we planting some native species and killing others, discouraging some native animals and encouraging others? Is it justifiable interference to put out water bowls around the house for the woodland birds, and what about leaving our oyster shells out for the quoll to enjoy the remains?

If I think back over the uncanny and numinous occurrences on Blackstone, they all have a quality of feeling that we are being acted upon as much as taking action, and that we are participating in a process far larger than ourselves. Is this where the sense of mystery lies? At the moment of the eagle's gift or the water's embrace, I am no longer in a human-centered world but enter into an intersubjective domain, lose my usual human sense of agency, lose my bearings.

The gifts we have received and passed on, the strange alchemy of salt and iron in the rocks and in my body, the intuition that the land is quieter now after a period of trauma, the look of wonder we exchanged after witnessing the sea eagle's spiraling mating dance over the water, the enigma of the liminal space between the grasstree—these all signal a gradual descent into the same mysterious realm of not-knowing and letting-go.

Slowly, this quality of lived reciprocity permeates more of our everyday encounters with wildlife and the elements, or, more simply, our being on Blackstone. It may be that we are all the time living intersubjectively with nature and usually not aware. We

can, however, become more aware with patience and attention. For this reason, there is an advantage of stories of one's own home range over tales of journeying afar—the lessons for everyday dwelling in place, which is where it counts, are more readily assimilated when they are lived out in the course of normal life rather than being imported from other places.

I begin to grasp what David Abram means when he refers to "mind-at-large" residing in a place. It is a natural extension of earlier thinking in cognitive science that considered the mind to be fully embodied and not just located in the brain [10]. Our sensing body is in constant dialogue with the place in which we live—the soundscape finds its way into our intonation, all touch is reciprocal, and so on [11]. In short, mind is *emplaced*, not simply embodied. None of this belittles human cognition, though it literally puts it in its place. To the contrary, it puts great demands on human knowing to become attentive to the sentience and intelligence in the more-than-human world. The glimpses I have been afforded at Blackstone so far suggest to me that this intelligence is as fathomless as the constellations.

To enter into intersubjective place relationships has required much of me. Once we embarked on life in a rich interspecies community, I was forced to accept what I saw in the mirror of the natural world—inattentiveness, lack of body awareness, a tendency to live in a bubble of my own making. My experience has been a dual process: on one hand, learning to let go of ingrained mental habits such as a fear of technical incompetence and refusal to see what's in front of me; on the other hand, learning new skills such as dual attention to body and environment, the receptivity and intuition of Goethean science, and using my eyes more actively and flexibly.

I have been quite hard on myself for being inattentive, while Gary Snyder, who has been practicing reinhabitation for far longer and more intensively, takes a more patient and generous view that gives me heart:

After twenty years of walking right past it on my way to chores in the meadow, I actually paid attention to a certain gnarly canyon live oak one day. Or maybe it was ready to show itself to me. I felt its oldness, suchness, inwardness, oakness, as if it were my own. Such intimacy makes you totally at home in life and in yourself. But the years spent working around that oak in that meadow and not really noticing it were not wasted. Knowing names and habits, cutting some brush here, getting some firewood there, watching for when the fall mushrooms bulge out are skills that are of themselves delightful and essential. And they also prepare one for suddenly meeting the oak [12].

Learning from the land has proceeded in tandem with the painful process of uncovering my psychological barriers to fuller personal relationship. I am reminded of what happens down on the shore when one turns over a rock—crabs of all sizes scuttle to avoid the light, just as I have reacted when my secretive habits and self-delusions have been exposed. In fact, it is meaningless for me to write of intersubjectivity with Blackstone except in relationship with Vicki, and it has always been thus for us and the places in which we have met, loved, and lived.

However painful it has been, the rewards have been greater. I have catalogued the gifts we have received from Blackstone, the joys and sorrows, structure and guidance.

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The gift cycle continues to work its magic as the circle widens.

Gary Snyder nicely encapsulates our experience on Bruny and poses the question of the extent to which I see this as a spiritual undertaking. He writes: "The actual demands of a life committed to a place, and living somewhat by the sunshine green plant energy that is concentrating in that spot, are so physically and intellectually intense that it is a moral and a spiritual choice as well" [13]. Vicki and I have devoted substantial parts of our lives to spiritual pursuits. We have actively re-evaluated the meaning of "spirit," especially in conjunction with "place" [14].

I've come to see that, in practice, my previous spiritual disciplines have involved some form of separation from the phenomenal world, which does not accord with my experience. What does resonate is Simone Weil's contention that heartfelt attention is a form of prayer. To me, a prayerful attitude to the sentient world in which we are immersed, which honors and respects it, *is* a spiritual choice in the sense that Snyder uses it [15].

As profound as the physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of our Blackstone life have been, I am mindful of Plumwood's caution: "Narratives of individual attachment to places are important, but often leave unidentified and unchallenged the larger *structural* obstacles to developing a place-sensitive society and culture" [16].

By structural obstacles, she means that contemporary modernist culture neglects and denies meaningful place relationships by such mechanisms as requiring employees in the labor market to move away from their home places and to keep moving, requiring the unemployed to move on bureaucratic demand, envisaging the earth as private property, and developing a real estate industry that is dependent upon treating the land as something to be bought and sold like any other commodity.

Challenging and overcoming these institutionalized mechanisms is a huge undertaking, and Plumwood is not as specific about the remedies as she is about the problems. She does, however, call upon modern societies to develop "communicative virtues" such as openness and attentiveness to "earth others," and reciprocity to unanticipated possibilities that might emerge from "dialogical and communicative relationships of sensitivity, negotiation, and mutual adaptation of the sort that we need in the context of the environmental crisis" [17].

I am sympathetic to Plumwood's call but find that individual place narratives and social structures are not as separated as she claims. Chronicling our Bruny encounters has inevitably involved us in local environmental action through word of mouth, through volunteers working on Blackstone, and through people responding to what I've written. When BIEN [Bruny Island Environmental Network] was formed and we began having discussions with the local council, we immediately confronted the obstacles Plumwood mentioned, including planning regulations and their implementation.

This isn't simply our experience. When Vicki and I were teaching "Sense of Place" and required students to spend time regularly in their chosen places, some students followed their growing awareness of environmental threats into wider social issues. For one student, a plastic bag that washed up on "her" patch of cherished seashore heralded an investigation of sources of marine pollution. Another student found himself the focus of increasing attention by local teenagers every week he visited a spot in a neighborhood park in an underprivileged area. Initially scornful of his attempts to write and sketch, they ended up asking him to help them draw and paint. Their parents, who were suspicious of these activities at first, started talking with him and he became the catalyst of neighborhood get-togethers of people from different ethnic backgrounds that continued well after the end of semester.

One Aboriginal woman student was able to contact her elders and listen to stories of their tribal land and ceremonies. She reconnected physically with the mangrove swamps and coastal woodlands of her people's country. She gained sufficient information from her elders to contribute to a Land Rights claim already underway. Her efforts helped her people gain access to a wider tract of land than what was originally proposed.

Questions of the environmental significance of place attachment now have a renewed sense of urgency now because of anthropogenic global warming. Local action is required on two major fronts: first, to reduce carbon emissions; and, second, to mitigate the local effects of warming already occurring. Even though it is only a small part of the vast suite of potential political, technological, economic, and social responses to climate change, one can ask what

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role place attachment might play, both in encouraging carbon reduction and in facilitating local adaptive responses.

As far as carbon reduction goes, I wouldn't for a moment suggest that the way Vicki and I live is a model for others to follow. There are other lifestyles, incorporating public transport, for example, that would have lower impact [18]. We didn't choose Blackstone because we could minimize our carbon footprint, but we have been able to reduce our impact by recycling, using solar and wind power, planting thousands of trees, buying second-hand clothes in charity stores, and so on. Far from diminishing, our quality of life has increased significantly.

This is a message seldom heard in the public debate over global warming. The debate is couched in negative terms—*loss* of economic growth and social welfare weighed against the *damage* to human and natural systems. On a positive note, living more within our ecological means has given us a more abundant, fulfilling life. The lessons of "enough," of making do and embracing limitations, have been profound. The more we attend to what nature gives us, the more we open to the more-than-human world, and the fewer consumer goods we want. Articulating this message challenges one of the larger structural obstacles to meaningful progress on climate change—energy-intensive consumption patterns maintained by marketing and advertising industries creating new consumer wants.

The obvious riposte would be that it's all very well for a comfortable middle-class Western person to espouse such a viewpoint, but it denies the millions of less-privileged people the economic advantages I enjoy. I acknowledge my relatively privileged position, but I'm not arguing that we are exemplars, or that one has to have a high standard of living before these lessons are applicable.

What I do maintain is that whatever one's socioeconomic status, the twinned process of reducing one's ecological footprint and putting more time, attention, and care into one's home place not only increases well-being but, if collectively pursued, reduces carbon consumption. This is even more strongly the case if one contributes to local ecological restoration or land regeneration projects. This is not to imply that it is a straightforward matter. As I related in letters four and six, I have found this way of life to be psychologically demanding, technically challenging, and physically taxing [19].

As far as local adaptation to climate change goes, one of the pre-eminent place scholars, Edward Relph, addresses the question of how a local sense of place can play a role in responding to global challenges:

The most reasonable strategy and best hope I can see for dealing with the global social and environmental challenges that are emerging is to find ways to mitigate their effect in particular places, and this means that every locality, place and community will have to adapt differently. A pragmatic sense of place can simultaneously facilitate these adaptations, contribute to a broader awakening of sense of place, and reinforce the spirit of place in all of its diverse manifestations [20].

By a pragmatic sense of place, Relph means applying the philosophy of pragmatism [21] to the combination of local knowledge and affection for a place with a grasp of the global connectivity of all places. This approach involves bringing the voices of local knowledge and experience into dialogue while avoiding the pathologies of place, considering alternatives and consequences, and reaching "imperfect but workable agreements" for courses of action.

But what of Plumwood's call for receptive and dialogical relationships with earth others? How can the communicative virtues of a place-sensitive culture be brought meaningfully into practical negotiations over climate-change responses? In fact, Plumwood may not be accurate in maintaining that modernist culture systematically *denies* meaningful place relationships. The point surely is that our culture systematically *segregates* place relationships, which are extremely difficult to bring into practical discussions concerning energy use, energy production, and land use, all of which remain almost entirely in the domain of economic and political thinking.

If I have discovered anything useful in this context at Blackstone, it is that global warming is not simply a logistical problem to be solved with technical knowledge. Rather, it is a condition to be experienced. And once experienced, it is best responded to with a combination of scientific and intuitive ways of knowing, the play between *eros* and *logos* that I have emphasized in all these letters.

I have found this unfolding awareness to be an elusive, sometimes frustrating, process that is both subjective and objective. Yet Plumwood would take Western society further into dialogue, negotiation, and mutual adaptation with "earth others" as the way through our environmental crises. How could this possibly be done?

For David Abram, who has been a guide and an inspiration on this journey, it is vital that "we leave abundant space in our days for an interchange with one another and with our surroundings that is not mediated by technology" [22]. He calls for a replenishment of oral culture in which writers tell their place stories and poets not only read to their children but take them outside and accustom them to listening to the voices of the more-than-human world. He calls for educators to make place-based education central to their teaching.

If these measures were adopted as the norm, future generations might eventually become part of a more place-sensitive society. Opportunities, however, are matched by difficulties, especially in mainstream education [23]. Indeed, toward the end of my tenure at the university where I taught, I found that a combination of financial, administrative, and legal-liability constraints made it increasingly difficult to take students on field excursions and on overnight camping trips. Nonetheless, as an agenda for parents, educators, and curriculum designers to adopt as they can, Abram's revitalizing of oral culture is at least a step in the right direction.

Underlying Abram's plea for "alert animal attention to the broader conversation that surrounds us" [24] is the recognition that human beings are not alone in dealing with the consequences of global warming. Our intelligence is only part of the mind-at-large that dwells in each place. Opening ourselves to this wider realm of meaning might lead to more responsive actions and a richer life. In my ecological restoration work on Blackstone, I had sufficient sense of partnership with regenerative forces in the land to imagine larger-scaled

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possibilities. One starting point is an attitude of humility, continuously remembering that there is much to learn from the natural world about adaptation [25].

There is much to be said for people in any organization asking themselves, "How can we learn our way toward greater sustainability?" [26]. The question implies that the answers aren't already known. The need is for a more creative process of collective learning and a journey into the unknown rather than simply balancing competing solutions to a problem. One source of inquiry would be the local place itself. In a co-operative learning environment, intellectual and intuitive ways of place knowing might be more likely to coexist and even work as complements [27].

Although Plumwood uses the term "place-sensitive culture" to describe her ideal society, I prefer the phrase "place-responsive culture." To respond to a place is to take a more active stance than merely being sensitive. The connotations of the word "responsive" are more robust and less susceptible to the criticism that one is being "too sensitive." The responses to place that interest me include the practical, everyday, and physical as well as the delicate, elusive, and numinous.

Beyond its role in addressing some of the causes and consequences of climate change, learning our way toward a more place-responsive culture is important for many reasons. Place-based education is richer and more locally relevant for students. A greater emphasis on local place relationships reinvigorates local communities and leads to a wide range of social, political, and environmental actions in defense of place. A local focus counteracts alienation and disconnection from the rest of life with which humans share the planet. A focus on place provides a basis for a more meaningful, productive, expressive, and grounded life. As Plumwood explains:

A world perceived in communicative and narrative terms is certainly far richer and more exciting than the self-enclosed world of meaningless and silent objects that exclusionary, monological and commodity thinking creates, reflecting back to us only the echo of our own desires [28].

Place responsiveness, however, has its drawbacks. There are what Relph calls "poisonous place temptations of parochialism and exclusion" [29] as well as arbitrary claims that there is only one authentic sense of a particular place and its history. Remedies for these drawbacks include fostering a broader perspective on one's local place—what Relph calls a "cosmopolitan imagination," which sees each locality as a node in a web of global processes [30].

In short, a place-responsive culture must be inclusive of individual and group differences. To fulfil its promise, a place-responsive culture must facilitate connections between the local and the global [31].

After mending the fence on the southern boundary one morning recently, I was returning through the tall grass at the top of our property when I heard the wild mewing and crying that announces a gathering of kelp gulls [32]. In the strong updraft at the break in slope, 40 or more were ascending, wheeling around in widening circles, one above the other as if traversing the interior of a vast, invisible cone.

I stood near the whirling vortex, gazing upward. The sun blazed through a gap in the storm clouds, illuminating the birds. Their wings are black on the dorsal side and white on the ventral side, so that for half the circle they were almost indistinguishable against the dark sky until, with a burst of light, the sun caught their alabaster undersides in brilliant contrast with the thundercloud. Black! Flash! White!

As my craning neck began to hurt, I flopped onto the ground, cushioned by a large untidy tussock of *powa* grass. As the birds rose higher, their cries dissipated, a faint echo of the earlier commotion merging with the wind as their forms vanished into the sky. Just when I thought they had all disappeared, one winked distantly like a faint star and then was gone.

I lay back in the grass, thoroughly disinclined to move. I felt uplifted by following the upward gyre. The alternating pattern seemed propitious—the same bird appearing black then white, black, white, every few seconds before ascending out of sight. An inscrutable lesson in appearances, not to

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be figured out but simply to be appreciated—an inspiration, a display of the unending splendor of the wild world, a manifestation of mind-at-large.

The energy of the kelp gulls' vortical flight was so strong that the impression of the inverted cone lingered ineffably above me. As I traced, in my mind's eye, the cone down to its bottom-most point, it contacted the ground where I was lying—in fact, it "pierced" the center of my body. Rilke's words came to me forcefully:

The inner—what is it?
If not intensified sky?

I'd quoted him at the end of the eighth letter to pinpoint the relationship between interior and exterior worlds. Now, it was an immediate, almost visceral experience of interconnection. "Intensified sky indeed," I murmured. I rose to my feet and let out a loud exhalation. Ha! I spread my arms out wide in the stiffening wind and whirled my way down the slope to Vicki and to lunch.

Months afterward, I discovered that the next two lines of Rilke's poem are even more apposite:

The inner—what is it?
If not intensified sky,
hurled through with birds and deep
with the winds of homecoming [33].

Notes

1. Plumwood, V., *Environmental Culture* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 169. Later, she qualifies her point slightly by lamenting that "philosophical contact with animals these days is mostly attenuated, and where it occurs is almost always with dependent animals that are individualized and highly disembedded from any wild communities" (p. 186).

2. Ibid, p. 187.

3. van Manen, M., *Researching Lived Experience* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2010).

4. Malpas, J., *Place and Experience* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), p. 193.

5. Plumwood uses the term "hyper-separation" to emphasize the degree of separation involved.

6. Even within philosophies of place, which generally reject hyper-separation, there are interesting differences. Pete Hay contrasts Relph's view of place as dialectical, interpreted differently by different people on a spectrum between existential insideness (to be inside a place and identified with it) and existential outsideness (alienated and not belonging in a place) with Norberg-Schulz"s notion of *genius loci*, the essential nature of a place that can be discerned and worked with in an appropriate way (that is, its essential character is independent of the human observer); see P. Hay, *Main Currents in Environmental Thought* Sydney: UNSW Press, 2002, p. 158. My experiences of interdependence and intersubjectivity put me in the dialectical camp, although I also support the possibility of discerning the qualities of a place and working with them.

7. Seamon, D., Place Attachment and Phenomenology, in *Place Attachment*, ed. Manzo, L. & Divine-Wright, P. (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 11.

8. Murphy, S., *Upside-Down Zen* (Melbourne: Lothian Books, 2004).

9. Plumwood, p. 187

10. See Varela, F., Thompson, E. & Rosch, E., *Cognitive Science and the Human Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

11. As explicated in the final chapters of Abrams' *Spell of the Sensuous* (NY: Pantheon, 1996).

12. Snyder, G., *A Place in Space* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1995) p. 263.

13. Ibid, p. 190.

14. We wrote a joint paper on the subject a few years ago (Cameron, J. and King, V, Spirit Place: Being Present in the Land, in *Spirituality, Mythopoesis and Learning*, ed. Willis, P., Leonard, T., Morrison, A. & Hodge, S. [Brisbane: Post Pressed, 2009]).

15. There are connections here with Plumwood's espousal of a materialist spirituality of place. She contends that ecological spirituality "will be materialist in avoiding spiritual remoteness, aiding awareness of and honouring the material and ecological bases of life, and it will be counter-centric in affirming continuity and kinship for earth others as well as their subjecthood, opacity and agency" (Plumwood 2002, p. 229; see note 1).

16. Ibid, p. 233.

17. Ibid, p. 169.

18. A lower carbon footprint could be achieved in medium density, low-impact housing within an urban co-operative generating some of its own power, growing some of its own food, sharing resources and skills, shopping locally and using foot, bicycle and public transport. This is the model being pursued by some Transition initiatives.

19. It was all the more difficult because I was tackling it on my own. Many of these problems can be reduced by tackling them as a member of a group.

20. Relph, E., A Pragmatic Sense of Place, in *Making Sense of Place*, ed. Vanclay, F., Higgins, M. & Blackshaw, A. (Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2008), p. 323.

21. Pragmatism is a school of philosophy founded by William James and Charles Peirce a century ago. There is less concern with "first things" such as principles and criteria than with "last things" such as consequences and facts (Relph, 2008, p. 321; see note 20).

22. Abram, 2010, p. 288.

23. Gruenewald, D. and Smith,G., eds, *Place Based Education in the Global Age* (NY: Routledge, 2007).

24. Abram, 2010, p. 291.

25. Humility toward earth others and openness to learning is part of a broader attitude that Plumwood terms the "recognition stance," which "can help to counter the deafness and backgrounding which obscures and denies what the non-human other contributes to our lives and collectives. Openness and attentiveness give us sensitivity to the world as alive, astir with responsive presences that vastly exceed the human; they allow us to be receptive to unanticipated possibilities and aspects of the non-human other, receiving and re-encountering them as potentially communicative and agentic beings with whom we ourselves must negotiate and adjust" (2002, p. 194; see note 1).

26. The first person I am aware of who framed it this way was Lester Milbrath in *Envisioning a Sustainable Society* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1989).

27. A starting point would be the physical indicators that warming is already occurring, the effects on plants and animals, and the strategies they are using to adjust. Part of this is the sharing of personal observations of what is happening in one's own locality—the voices of local place experience and knowledge that Relph champions (see note 19).

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Informal conversations of this kind occur all the time. For example, I often exchange impressions of what's happening in our woodland, especially regarding the temperature-sensitive *Eucalyptus viminalis*, with other North Bruny residents. Seldom, however, are these impressions channeled into an ongoing semi-formal process. Not only would place-specific information be gathered, but also the effects on the dynamics within the group would be salutary.

Another way in which place experience could play a greater role would be if such a group went on excursions together through the local area. I was reminded of the power of this simple idea when a young woman who was the coordinator of a catchment management group approached me after I had given a lecture in Canberra on sense of place. She told me that when the group, which represented a range of entrenched interests, first convened, they were so much at loggerheads they could not even agree on what the meeting agenda should be, let alone conduct any reasonable discussions.

In frustration, she organized a weekend bus trip through the catchment for the group. After they had visited a few sites, people started talking with each other about their memories of how one place used to be a good swimming hole, flooded every spring, and so on. The trip transformed the dynamics of the group; once they could talk with each other as people responding to the same place, they were able to have a much more productive discussion about what needed to be done in the catchment.

This possibility could be expanded by organizing walking trips through an area for such a group. In each of the "five senses of place" colloquia I organized, there was an all-day walk, and the conversations that ensued were often the most far-reaching and heartfelt.

28. Plumwood, 2002, p. 230; see note 1.

29. Relph, 2008, p. 322; see note 20

30. Ibid.

31. In my chapter, "Learning Country: A Case Study of Australian Place-Responsive Education," in Gruenewald and Smith, 2007 (see note 23), and responding to David Gruenwald's comment in the same publication about the need for a critical place pedagogy. The discourse on local and global senses of place owes much to Doreen Massey's *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 1994).

32. The Kelp Gull (*Larus dominicanus*) is the second largest of the gulls that frequent the region, with a wingspan of up to 55 centimeters. Unlike the Pacific Gull (*Larus pacificus*), which is usually seen in pairs, the kelp gull is regularly found in gro3ps of twenty or more.

33. In *Ahead of All Parting: The Selected Poetry and Prose of Rainer Maria Rilke* (NY: Modern Library, 1995), p. 191.

Images by Vicki King

p. 14: Eucalypts and Channel, oil on canvas, 2017.
p. 15: Parched Paddocks and Casuarinas, oil on canvas, 2017.
p. 16: Gulls, 2017.
p. 17: Sooty Oystercatchers, 2017.
p. 19: Wedgetail Eagles, 2017.

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Book Review

John Cameron, 2016. *Blackstone Chronicles: Place-Making on a Tasmanian Island*. Bruny Island, Tasmania: Blackstone Press.

Reviewed by Isis Brook

John Cameron has been involved in place-based study for years and has published many papers, book chapters, and an edited collection on the subject as well as founding the Australian Sense of Place Colloquium. *The Blackstone Chronicles* is, in one sense, a continuation of that work, but in another sense, it signifies a step change: A deepening and enlargement of that lifetime of engagement with place questions. Cameron's previous work included the experiential in good measure. For example, his tracking of the physical, emotional, and conceptual change in his reception of and engagement with gardens in his chapter for *Changing Places: Re-imagining Australia* (Sydney: Longueville, 2003).

In this earlier work, Cameron demonstrated the phenomenological skills of investigating experience, which he brings to life through honest reporting and insightful interpretation. *Blackstone Chronicles* builds on these previous efforts but goes much further. The life changes of leaving university responsibilities and moving to Blackstone (his home on Bruny Island, Tasmania) has meant that John—and here it seems appropriate to switch to first-name terms in view of the deeply personal nature of this book—could apply that same diligence to phenomenological experiencing and recording on a longer-term, larger-scaled project. Moreover, it is a project that entails engagement and change at all levels. The results are astounding.

Blackstone Chronicles records a journey from the discovery of a 44-acre smallholding through building a life there and engaging with the place, its history, culture, flora and fauna, and landscape forms. The engagement is intimate, detailed and deeply contextual as John and his partner, artist Victoria King, come to know this place and shape its development through an attentive, heartfelt listening.

This could make the book sound like a practical guide to conservation on a smallholding or a self-indulgent account of a personal story. It is neither. *Blackstone Chronicles* is a guide to the application of phenomenological method to living an emplaced life. An early chapter is a detailed account of applying Goethean observation to a puzzling geological phenomenon at the water's edge. John takes the reader through something more personal than a method set out; he gives the sense of what it is like engaging with nature in this way. An early revelation, afforded by the rocks and unfolding through the book, is the movement from being receptive to nature in the special moment to taking that quality of attention into everyday life.

In living a life, rather than simply enjoying a field-trip excursion, a deeper connection to place is possible, but also hard decisions must be made. The central theme of making a connection to the natural world is challenged early on with the issue of invasive weeds impacting the effort to restore native trees. The story of the battle with weeds is one of the remarkable strands of the book. John gives an account of the struggle with the being of the thistle in both the backbreaking physical labor and the inner transformation that has to take place to arrive at a new relationship. The older trees in the place suffer from both climate change and previous incursion. Through John 's close study—which is actually a heartfelt being with them—their stories unfold.

Lessons are learned throughout the engagement with place as John and Vicki's lives become more and more woven into the fabric of their land and the local community. Synchronicity plays a role with many interesting juxtapositions and meaning-enriched coincidences. A sense of responsibility permeates their interactions with place. This is brought to a dramatic point when neighboring land is advertised for potential development. The result is that concern for personal privacy, wildlife conservation and cultural heritage is added to John and Vicki's more immediate concerns.

They begin a search for the remains of an inter-culturally significant sod hut near their property, and they follow its history back in time, with their place-based imagining and historical research leading to their purchasing the land and thereby protecting it. Through their researches, the land has now been registered by the Heritage Council as permanently protected from development.

Although the book is shaped through episodes and themes, there is always a circling back—like the birds of Bruny island—to the physical, psychological, and spiritual processes of coming into relationship, of braiding together oneself with the land's other inhabitants—the wildlife of wallaby, quoll, heron, and eagle; the vegetation of grasstree and Californian thistle; the tangible spirit of those who have gone before; and the salt and iron of the shoreline. The relationship is deepened through responding with art along with meditation and ecological study. Vicki's artwork arising from these experiences illustrates the book throughout and helps the reader to live a little closer to John and Vicki's experience.

Reading the text is like engaging with a piece of organic-inquiry research. The phenomenological discipline of recording experience and the, sometimes searing, self-depreciating veracity of John's writing brings the experience of the Blackstone encounter alive.

In a later chapter, consideration of our sensory modalities comes to a moving

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crescendo when John experiences serious medical problems with his eyes and must face the prospect of blindness (oh, how our language is littered with visual metaphor!). The treatments and the shifts and changes they bring about is recorded because the research never stops—each change or deprivation is an opportunity to experience the world differently, and its fruits are placed before the reader. The potential loss of the visual is all the more moving because of what has gone before.

In another remarkable encounter, John experiences an evening alone by a campfire on the beach and feels drawn to take a canoe out on the water. This time the "gift" from nature is the experience of phosphorescence in the sea. The experience and John's detailed analysis demonstrate phenomenological description at its best. The discussion of this as an invitation from nature that was, on this occasion, heard and responded to helps to develop a major theme of the book: How can we do this? How can we enter into this relationship as human subjects capable of stripping away our trivial concerns and yet use our human subjectivity to forge that connection. *Blackstone Chronicles* demonstrates that this is possible and works as a valuable guide.

No commentary on the book can leave out the birds and their role as guides, emissaries, inspirations, and constant friends. It is the birds who become, through careful study and listening, the signs that guide and confirm activities and changes and assist the emplacement of John and Vicki as part of Blackstone.

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Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

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Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

Published two times a year, ***EAP*** is a forum and clearing house for research and design that incorporate a qualitative approach to environmental and architectural experience and meaning.

One key concern of ***EAP*** is design, education, and policy supporting and enhancing natural and built environments that are beautiful, alive, and humane. Realizing that a clear conceptual stance is integral to informed research and design, the editor is most interested in phenomenological approaches but also gives attention to related styles of qualitative research. ***EAP*** welcomes essays, letters, reviews, conference information, and so forth.

Exemplary Themes

- The nature of environmental and architectural experience;
- Sense of place, including place identity and place attachment;
- Architectural and landscape meaning;
- The environmental, architectural, spatial, and material dimensions of lifeworlds;
- Changing conceptions of space, place, and nature;
- Home, dwelling, journey, and mobility;
- Environmental encounter and its relation to environmental responsibility and action;
- Environmental design as place making;
- Environmental and architectural atmospheres and ambiences;
- The role of everyday things—furnishings, tools, clothing, interior design, landscape features, and so forth—in supporting people's sense of environmental wellbeing;
- Sacred space, landscape, and architecture;
- The practice of a *lived* environmental ethic.

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