



Special Issue of Australian Journal of Environmental Education:

Indigenous Philosophy in Environmental Education: Relearning How to Love, Feel, Hear, and Live with Place

Anne Poelina, Yin Paradies, Sandra Woollorton, Mindy Blaise, Libby
Jackson-Barratt, Laurie Guimond

Call for Papers

Indigenous philosophy has everything to do with environmental education (EE). In Australia, EE has a history of around 65,000 years (Clarkson et al., 2017). However, many people of Westernised nations have forgotten their socio-cultural relationships with Place¹ and the ways in which Place needs to be understood, listened to, felt and respected. This is only a recent omission – less than 2000 years ago – yet it is a key to survival on our planet (Ghosh, 2021; Harding, 2022). Since everyone is Indigenous to somewhere, even if tens of generations ago, everyone has the capacity to relearn how to love, feel, hear, live in and with Place.

The [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#) 2021 – 2030 is a ‘global rallying cry to heal our planet’ (United Nations Environment Program, 2021). At the same time, 2022-2032 is the [UNESCO Indigenous Languages Decade](#) intended to build a ‘global community for the preservation, revitalization and support of indigenous languages worldwide’². One of its aims is to mainstream linguistic diversity and multilingualism aspects, into sustainable development (UNESCO, 2021), fostering the exploration of stories of sustainable lifeways. This current UN-sanctioned connection provides a compelling opportunity for learning or relearning how to love, feel, hear, live with and heal Place through the wisdom of Indigenous people, languages, and cultures. This offers a time-honoured way of reshaping and reconfiguring environmental education. These ideas have been developed by Indigenous led researchers and research teams over the last two decades or so (for example Heckenberg, 2016; Milgin, Nardea, Grey, Laborde, & Jackson, 2020; Poelina et al., 2021; Redvers et al., 2020; Williams, 2018, 2019).

These UN-generated opportunities and international research trends offer an opening into big picture thinking about environmental education. Since Indigenous philosophy is Place-based and situated with Indigenous groups, there is no ‘one’ Indigenous philosophy, but there are

¹ In this document, we capitalise Place and Country, in recognition of their animate, sentient nature. In Australia, the use of the term: Country may denote an Indigenous understanding of Place with family connection, and in North America Land may be used in this way (Tuck, McKenzie, & McCoy, 2014).

² This is a quote, so we have used indigenous without a capital I. Being an Australian journal, we use Indigenous because capitalizing is an Australian protocol of respect.



internationally agreed philosophical tenets. The 2010 Redstone Statement is one such statement (<https://www.majala.com.au/news/redstone-statement>). There is a global level of agreement about precepts among Indigenous philosophers (Corntassel et al., 2018; Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019; Poelina et al., 2021). Indigenous philosophy encourages rethinking, re-imagining, renewing, regenerating, and relearning what environmental education is, should be and could be. Rethinking and reworking these overarching ideals offers radical hope for transformation, requiring new or renewed concepts (Lear, 2006) for a living, breathing, sentient Earth.

The transformation we dream of, and need, goes far beyond discussion, assertion or argument about Environmental Education or Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) frameworks, structures, and steps. We need to learn and sustain Indigenous and local knowledges, wisdom and practices through all education/s in Indigenous-led, respectful ways, recognising Indigenous rights and political responsibilities. Indigenous languages often recognise Place-relationships in which Place is family, and has names, stories, histories, intent, and integrity (Poelina et al., 2020; Woollorton, White, Palmer, & Collard, 2021). From an Indigenous philosophy perspective, we see Place offering reciprocal care and demanding respect (Milgin et al., 2020). Place is seen by many Indigenous groups to have memory and often receives recognition such as ceremony, dance, songs in its honour or daily conversation to acknowledge and value its living spirits (Manikuakanishtiku, Gagnon, Desbiens, & Kanapé, 2021; O'Donnell, Poelina, Pelizzon, & Clark, 2020; Pelizzon et al., 2021; Poelina et al., 2020).

Sharing Indigenous learnings 'on Country with Country' can offer Place insight that illuminates the brilliance, and co-existence of living systems. For instance, the lure of the nectar in ripe flowers to the nectar-feeding birds, or the new green shoots of plants in the morning, exhibits the shimmering vibrancy of life (Bird Rose, 2017; Morphy, 1989). Indigenous philosophers see necessity for the revitalisation of life (Graham, 2008, 2014; Morris, 2019; RiverOfLife, Poelina, Bagnall, & Lim, 2020). There is global agreement that Indigenous wisdom is a necessary part of regeneration for our times (Aronson, Goodwin, Orlando, Eisenberg, & Cross, 2020). The ways in which this regeneration happens, this great relearning, demands de-colonial (Williams, 2018, 2019; Williams, Bunda, Claxton, & MacKinnon, 2018) and anti-colonial (Liboiron, 2021) ways of doing, being, knowing and working (Taylor, Blaise, & Giugni, 2013). To lead environmental education in genuine partnership towards agreed Indigenous goals using Indigenous ways of working may require relearning ways of doing, being and knowing (Poelina et al., 2020). How are some of the complexities of doing this work being identified and negotiated?

There is an emerging return to vitalism in the West – that is, recognising that Place is alive and communicative (Ghosh, 2021; Harding, 2006, 2022). There are many reasons for this renewal, including increasing Indigenous-led activism and growing recognition that neoliberalism and neo-colonial policies promote a separatist, binary ontology (as divergent from Indigenous ways of knowing and being) and are harming the world. As a result, Indigenous owners are teaching philosophy locally and globally – to diverse groups of



learners. How are collaborations functioning, so that Indigenous wisdom can reach all peoples in all systems? How are local groups managing tensions, dilemmas and constraints respectfully, to return Indigenous ownership, rights and status to its rightful place in local decision-making and national constitutions? Given modern neo-colonial controls, how are local empowerment and support mechanisms for Indigenous custodians ensuring that Indigenous people make decisions on Indigenous issues in rightful ways, in alignment with agreements such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2011)?

Invitation and Suggestion of Topics

We invite 300 word proposals, for 6000 word papers or reports describing your Environmental Education inspired by Indigenous Philosophy. *Specifically, our interest is in Relearning How to Love, Feel, Hear, and Live with Places.* Research partnerships may wish to use the term ‘kin’ in the ways of Kimmerer (2017), whereby kin is an Indigenous word from her own language that means relation. It is not bound by the conceptual confines of English to terms such as she, he, it, which can have the effect of separating, depersonalising, and limiting. However, these can be contentious positions for non-Indigenous writers and teachers without Indigenous collaborators. (Liboiron, 2021). How do collaborative research groups tread lightly across the minefield of controversy? In the necessary return to vitalism and respect for Indigenous knowledge, Place and leadership, who can relearn how to hear, see and heal Place for the sake of a healthy future for all?

Of course, Indigenous partnerships inclusive of Place, Country, River or other living places are very welcome to submit one or more proposals. For an example of Place-inclusive authorship, see RiverOfLife et al. (2020); RiverOfLife, Taylor, and Poelina (2021); RiverOfLife, Unamen Shipu, et al. (2021). Here the purpose is creativity, imagination, and visualisation. All academic styles are welcome as we imagine, conceptualise and practice new ways of learning together, addressing problems overlooked in assuming binary ways of thinking that are not always relevant or useful. Examples of binary thinking include Indigenous/non-Indigenous, nature/culture, living/non-living, girl/boy, teacher/student or black/white. An example of a common binary is the notion of teacher as lead, guide, instructor or ‘know-it-all’ and child as student. There are many situations where we need such binaries, but limiting ourselves to them can prevent learning. For example, children who are unschooled in binary thinking can lead teachers in rethinking ways of relating to places, more than humans and people. See for example Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, and Blaise (2016), Wintoneak and Blaise (2021) or Blaise and Hamm (2020).

We invite the use of Indigenist research (Marker, 2019; Rigney, 2006), and Indigenous philosophy as worldview or methodology (Wooltorton, Collard, Horwitz, Poelina, & Palmer, 2020), not necessarily as the focus or subject, but it can be - see Poelina et al. (2021) or Wooltorton, Poelina, and Collard (2021) for example. An Indigenous way of knowing, being and doing holds relationship as responsibility. In this way we are obliged to care for Place – it is an intergenerational obligation – which means rights and responsibilities go together (Milgin et al., 2020; Pelizzon et al., 2021). How are Indigenous and non-Indigenous



collaborations improving teaching, learning and practice? How are these initiatives impacting our environmental education programs, relationships and practices in all of our different contexts – in adult education, universities, schools, homes and field-based? Environmental education accounts that illustrate Indigenous values and ethics are encouraged. We look forward to your response to this invitation.

Please email your proposals to Sandra.Wooltorton@nd.edu.au by 30th June, 2022.

Brief Resume of Proposed Guest Editors:

Professor Anne Poelina is a Nyikina Warrwa Indigenous leader, environmental educator, human and earth rights advocate, filmmaker and a respected academic researcher. In 2017, she was awarded a Laureate from the Women's World Summit Foundation (Geneva), and is Co-Chair of Nulungu Research Institute at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Yawuru Country in the Western Australian Kimberley. She holds membership to national and global Think Tanks. Professor Poelina is a Visiting Fellow with the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University, Water Justice Hub, to focus on Indigenous Water Valuation and Resilient Decision-making. Recent collaborative articles are *Regeneration time: ancient wisdom for planetary wellbeing* (2022); *Feeling and Hearing Country* (2019); *Hearing, Voicing and Healing: Rivers as Culturally Located and Connected* (2021); *Voicing Rivers* (2022) and *River Relationships: For the Love of Rivers* (2022). She co-edited the *Voicing Rivers Special Issue of River Research and Applications* (2022). Orcid ID: 0000-0001-6461-7681. See web sites: www.martuwarrafitzroyriver.org

Professor Yin Paradies is an Aboriginal-Asian-Anglo Australian of the Wakaya people from the Gulf of Carpentaria. He is Chair in Race Relations at Deakin university. He conducts research on the health, social and economic effects of racism as well as anti-racism theory, policy and practice across diverse settings, including online, in workplaces, schools, universities, housing, the arts, sports and health. He also teaches and undertakes research in Indigenous knowledges and decolonisation. Yin is an anarchist radical scholar and climate / ecological activist who is committed to understanding and interrupting the devastating impacts of modern societies. He seeks meaningful mutuality of becoming and embodied kinship with all life through transformed ways of knowing, being and doing that are grounded in wisdom, humility, respect, generosity, down-shifted collective sufficiency, voluntary simplicity, frugality, direct participation and radical localisation.

Assoc. Professor Sandra Wooltorton is from Noongar Boodjar, also known as southwest Western Australia, and is Senior Research Fellow at the Nulungu Research Institute at the University of Notre Dame Australia, in Yawuru Country in the Western Australian Kimberley. She is a geographer, environmental educator and transdisciplinary researcher with interests in environmental humanities. Recent collaborative articles are *Regeneration time: ancient wisdom for planetary wellbeing* (2022); *Feeling and Hearing Country* (2019); *Hearing, Voicing and Healing: Rivers as Culturally Located and Connected* (2022); *Voicing*



Rivers (2022) and River Relationships: For the Love of Rivers (2022). She co-edited the Voicing Rivers Special Issue of River Research and Applications (2022). Email: Sandra.wooltorton@nd.edu.au. Orcid ID: 0000-0001-8677-870X

Professor Mindy Blaise is a Vice Chancellor's Professorial Research Fellow, in the School of Education, Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia. She is also Co-director of the Centre for People, Place & Planet and Co-founder of the Common Worlds Research Collective. Her transdisciplinary and postdevelopmental environmental education research with the more-than-human uses responsive, affect-focused and creative methods to rework a humanist ontology. She is interested in how the more-than-human and feminist speculative research practices activate new meanings about childhood that sit outside the narrow confines of developmentalism. Orcid ID: 0000-0003-2476-9407.

Dr Libby Jackson-Barrett has recently moved to Edith Cowan University. She has worked in Initial Teacher Education for 17 years and has a particular interest in culturally relevant and critical pedagogy, diversity, inclusively and Indigenous education issues. Libby and colleagues have worked on a number of research projects in Aboriginal Education. Her current research is On Country Learning with Murdoch University colleague Associate Professor Libby Lee-Hammond. Their On Country Learning research is breaking new ground in Aboriginal education, receiving recognition as an Innovative Pedagogical approach in the Early Years for the Asia Pacific Region by ARNEC. Libby is a member of the Australian Council Education Research (ACER) team for the Logie award winning first Indigenous animation, Little J and Big Cuz. Libby is also working on the Wirrpanda Deadly Sista Girlz Evaluation project with Murdoch University colleague Dr Anne Price.

Professor Laurie Guimond is a professor in the geography department at Université du Québec à Montreal (Québec, Canada) and an Adjunct Research Fellow in the Nulungu Research Institute at the University of Notre Dame Australia, in Yawuru Country in the Western Australian Kimberley. As an environmental educator, her research revolves around enhancing the essential role of intercultural relations in the territorial development of northern Québec. Other fields of research she investigates include: contemporary northern and rural mobilities and migrations; indigenous – non-indigenous geographies of everyday life of the North; Indigenous awareness training. Recent collaborative articles are Hearing, Voicing and Healing: Rivers as Culturally Located and Connected (2022); and Voicing Rivers (2022). She co-edited the Voicing Rivers Special Issue of River Research and Applications (2022). Email: Guimond.Laurie@uqam.ca Orcid ID: 0000-0001-8562-1524.

Proposed schedule

30th June 2022 – last day for submission of proposals/abstracts.

30th July 2022 – advise outcomes of decisions regarding proposal/abstract acceptance.

30th November 2022 – send encouraging emails to authors regarding progress.

30th February 2023 – last day for manuscripts due.



30th October 2023 – editorial finalised and in system for production.

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