

EDITORIAL

Pedagogies of Hope (with Feathers)

At the heart of Issue 1 Volume 28 is pedagogy and hope. It is a reminder of Paulo Freire's '*Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*'. As Freire eloquently articulates:

Without hope, we are hopeless and cannot begin the struggle to change. To attempt to do without hope, which is based on the need for truth as an ethical quality of the struggle, is tantamount to denying that struggle one of its mainstays. (p. 8)

Emilia Fägerstam commences this issue with a study about environmental education centre officers' and teachers' observations and perceptions of urban children and young people's experiences with/of/in nature. The study was situated in New South Wales, Australia, revealing some of the unique challenges in the Australian natural environment. Consistent with existing research and commentary, Fägerstam identifies that teachers perceive urban children and young people as having limited experience in nature, often mediated by fear and agitation. She echoes the increasingly identified need for nature to be readily and authentically experienced by children and young people at school and in their everyday lives, alongside a call for teacher education to incorporate outdoor education.

David Kowalewski follows with an intriguing and compelling article about teaching trophic cascades using wolves as a case-study. He offers a hopeful pedagogical argument based upon indigenous wisdom, multidisciplinary, circular modelin, ecosystem fragility and human hubris. He writes:

A spiritual teacher once wrote, 'You cannot control nature, for nature controls you' (Ingerman, 1997, p. 143). The more we separate from nature, the more ecosystems become unsustainable. Trophic cascades teach us the illusion of human domination. Arguably, wolves affect us as much as we affect them. The notion that we are separate is overwhelmingly overturned by the scientific evidence — and the howlings of wolves.

Kowalewski provides insight about pedagogy that is rarely discussed and researched in environmental education. Recent works such as '*Animality and Environmental Education*' (Oakley, 2011) begin such discussions by challenging the ideas of Freire and others. Kowalewski likewise does this by not only presenting a hopeful pedagogy, but a pedagogy that transcends anthropocentric understandings of nature.

The final two feature articles are situated within teacher education and pedagogy. Sue Wilson focuses on the drivers and blockers of Education for Sustainability (EfS) in primary teacher education in Australia. She reveals parallel trends with existing research about teachers' thinking and practices in schools and teacher

education, and indeed the pivotal role of ‘the teacher’ in fully realising environmental education.

The last article offers a hopeful, pedagogical account where a community of learners come together in teaching and learning environmental education. Zeegers, Paige, Lloyd, Russo, and Roetman identify how a group of teacher educators, environmental scientists and a local radio station worked with teachers on a joint teaching and community adventure called ‘Operation Magpie’. The study identifies support, innovation and a system-wide approach to curriculum as core to the strategies embraced and implemented in teaching/learning environmental education.

Following the feature articles, a research thesis synopsis and two book reviews are presented.

The research synopsis (the first to be published by the *Australian Journal of Environmental Education*) is by Julie Kennelly, presenting a summation of her PhD thesis about Education for Sustainability and teacher education. Her thesis offers deep insight pertaining to the teaching and learning of EfS in teacher education and preservice teachers’ preparedness in teaching environmental education as beginning graduate teachers.

Both book reviews (by Kate Neale and Ranjan Kumar Datta) provide insightful interpretations on politics, social justice and capitalism. Neale aptly quotes Magdoff and Foster (2012), stating: ‘Put simply, it is essential to break with a system based on a single motive — the perpetual accumulation of capital. . . . Such a break is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for the creation of a new ecological civilization.’ While such reviews remind us of the intractable dilemma of the dominant Western capitalist machine wrought by greed, power and inequality, the reviews (and the books themselves) provide a hopeful passage forward.

Hope Is the Thing With Feathers

Emily Dickinson (1924)

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,

And never stops at all,
And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.

I’ve heard it in the chillest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

References

- Dickinson, E. (1924). *The complete poems of Emily Dickinson*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.
- Freire, P. (2004). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Oakley, J. (2011). Animality and environmental education (Guest Edited). *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 16(1), 1–200.

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