

*Vision, Body, and Spirit
in Curriculum Inquiry*

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VISION, BODY, AND SPIRIT IN CURRICULUM INQUIRY

BY

KAREN WILSON BAPTIST

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of
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of
MASTER OF EDUCATION**

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Abstract

Curriculum as both a mode of inquiry and as enacted in the classroom could stimulate greater awareness through language and experiences which touch the mind, the body and the spiritual dimensions of being. Slattery (1995) observes, "The postmodern curriculum ... is a healing dance, a spiral of creation, and a yearning for wisdom embedded in this interrelationship of body, mind, and spirit" (p.185). This inquiry seeks to empower, to embrace and to celebrate the potential of evolving paradigms of human understanding. Curriculum and curriculum inquiry should inspire wide awakeness; a positioning in the world where eyes are open to the potential of making meaning from an infinite range of experiences. In keeping with this notion, multiple levels of interpretation as well as a variety of sources of knowledge - visual art, journal writing, poetry, literature, academic research and the making of a garden - are woven into this document.

I have come to see the pursuit for balance of mind, body and spirit as my life quest and because of that foundation of understanding, these concepts form the basis of my educational questions. For example: How do notions of mind, body and spirit relate to curriculum inquiry? Can these forms of knowledge invigorate curriculum by inspiring human holism, the empowerment of individual and community, and by re-connecting the schism between humanity and nature? Dewey (1997) observes, "All of these separations culminate in one between knowing and doing, theory and practice, between mind as the end and spirit of action and the body as its organ and means" (p.209). In this inquiry I seek to flesh out the concepts, theories, and practical implications of curriculum as vision, as body, and as spirit.

Dedication

*To all of those who provided the seeds,
the nurturing and the faith
that brought this inquiry to life.*

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Vision, Body, and Spirit in Curriculum Inquiry

Karen Wilson Baptist

University of Manitoba

Vision, Body, and Spirit in Curriculum Inquiry

*Imagination is a mode of consciousness, a unique capacity of the mind,
shimmering behind everything we see and do.*

Laura Sewall

Chapter 1 • Introduction

In the summer of 2000, the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba provided me with an opportunity to teach the materials section of a third year technology course for Interior Option/Bachelor of Interior Design students. Although I was in the midst of attending an intense summer session course, I frantically began my preparations for my inaugural teaching adventure. At that time, I was primarily concerned with the methodological requirements of building a curriculum, but I was instinctually aware that the formation of this curriculum was based in a personal and theoretical vision of curriculum. In the months following that initial foray into teaching, I have begun to flesh out that vision by grounding my intuition in research, and by committing to a conceptualization of curriculum through the creation of this inquiry document.

This reflective journey allows me to unfold a curricular vision which I believe is rooted in my experience as both learner and inquirer. This notion implies trust in the possibilities of self and of self-knowledge. Multiple viewpoints, and the merger of various interests and sources of knowledge are valued. I believe that curriculum and curriculum inquiry should inspire wide awakeness; a positioning in the world where eyes are open to the potential of making meaning from an infinite range of experiences. Knowledge is formed holistically and a greater sense of consciousness towards self and world is evoked. According to Bruner (1986):

If he (the learner) fails to develop any sense of what I shall call reflective intervention in the knowledge he encounters, the young person will be operating continually from the outside in - knowledge will control and guide him. If he develops a sense of self that is premised on his ability to penetrate knowledge for his own uses, and if he can share and negotiate the result of his penetrations, then he becomes a member of the culture creating community. (p.127)

Curriculum as both a mode of inquiry and as enacted in the classroom could stimulate greater awareness through language and experiences which touch the mind, the body and the spiritual dimensions of being. This curricular vision re-positions the self as interpreter and creator of lived worlds rather than as passive receptor, powerless and paralyzed by a contemporary zeitgeist of social malaise, hopelessness, and environmental degradation which permeates western society.

Slattery (1995) observes, "The postmodern curriculum ... is a healing dance, a spiral of creation, and a yearning for wisdom embedded in this interrelationship of body, mind, and spirit" (p.185). Likewise, this inquiry seeks to empower, to embrace and, to celebrate the potential of evolving paradigms of human understanding.

1.2 My Stance as Researcher

As an educational inquirer, I situate this research within the relatively new field of curriculum theory. The contemporary branch of this form of educational research is characterized by the work of William Pinar and was introduced to the field of curriculum through his 1975 compendium; Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists (see Schubert, 1986, p. 133). Included in Pinar's collection are writings by pioneers in the field of curriculum theorizing: Maxine Greene, William Kliebard, Madelene Grumet, and Henry Giroux, as well as Pinar himself. Forging new ground, yet theoretically linked to the work

of John Dewey and A.N. Whitehead, the "reconceptualists" seek to liberate educators from the scientizing of curriculum and curriculum inquiry. According to Pinar (1975):

Reconceptualists tend to concern themselves with the internal and existential experiences of the public world. They tend to study not "change in behavior" or "decision making in the classroom," but matters of temporality, transcendence, consciousness, and politics. In brief, the reconceptualist attempts to understand the nature of the educational experience. (p.xii-xiii)

As the reconceptualists turned away from the sciences as the dominant epistemological paradigm, they looked to philosophy, to the visual arts, to music and poetry, and to autobiography as legitimate sources of knowledge and meaning-making. These early cross-disciplinary forays, combined with a paradigmatic shift from a modernist world view to a postmodern world view over the last three decades, has led to a flourishing of the curriculum theorizing field. Postmodern researchers, (for example: Doll, 1993; Lather, 1991; Graham, 1991; van Manen, 1990; Slattery, 1995) embrace new ways of exploring theory, conducting inquiry and developing meaningful educational experiences. Although the ideology of postmodernism implies an erosion of disciplinary boundaries and of confining research paradigms, the postmodern researcher must acknowledge and deconstruct the research genealogies which constitute his or her vision of curriculum inquiry. Rather than a description of disciplinary subscription or indoctrination, this researcher transparency forms a historicity, which when woven with the researcher's own ontological and epistemological stance, forms a deeply personal yet educationally relevant reconstruction of contemporary curriculum inquiry. In keeping with this requirement of researcher transparency, I suggest that my stance as a postmodern researcher has been influenced primarily by phenomenological, hermeneutic and aesthetic traditions of inquiry. Following is a brief exploration of those traditions and how I will interpret them in this document.

1.2.1 My Hermeneutic Stance

The historicity of hermeneutics commits the inquirer to a research mode which seeks to generate and rejuvenate meaning. Macdonald (1999) states:

The fundamental human quest is the search for meaning and the basic human capacity for this search is experienced in the hermeneutic process, the process of interpretation of the text (whether artifact, natural world, or human action). This is the search (or research) for greater understanding that motivates and satisfies us.

(cited in Slattery, 1995, p.119)

Interpretive in nature, and etymologically derived from the Greek messenger Hermes, hermeneutic inquiry also assumes that meanings shift; that interpretations are dynamic and dialogical in nature - conversations between researcher and self, and between researcher and other. Hermeneutic inquiry explores human understanding and freedom, seeking not definitions, but rather, a deeper understanding of our subjectivity and place in the world.

According to Smith (1991):

The hermeneutic imagination constantly asks for what is at work in particular ways of speaking and acting in order to facilitate an ever-deepening appreciation of that wholeness and integrity of the world which must be present for thought and action to be possible at all. (p.197)

Hermeneutics supposes that we are "beings in the world" (van Manen, 1990) and positioned thus, we cannot separate our knowledge from knowing because all meaning is culturally constructed and contextualized. Therefore, in hermeneutic inquiry, the empirically based notion of the objective gaze of a researcher is an epistemological mythology. Rather, as reported by Smith (1991):

The conversational quality of hermeneutic truth points to the requirement that any study carried on in the name of hermeneutics should provide a report of the researcher's own transformations undergone in the process of the inquiry; a showing of the dialogical journey, we might call it. Underscored here is a

profoundly ethical aspect to hermeneutic inquiry in a life-world sense; namely, a requirement that a researcher be prepared to deepen her or his own self-understanding in the course of the research. (p.198)

This gift of the hermeneutic experience - the journey of researcher or "openness to the mystery" (Caputo, 1987), suggests that in hermeneutic inquiry, research outcomes are impossible to pre-determine. Gadamer (1977, 1979, 1985) suggests that the nature of the inquiry holds part of the answer to how the inquirer should proceed (Short, 1991, p.198). Therefore rather than presenting a prescription for curriculum reform, I propose an exploration of experience and interpretation that could inspire others to question, to dream and to play. Caputo (1987) states, "In the end, radical hermeneutics does not lead us back to safe shores and terra firma; it leaves us twisting slowly in the wind. It leaves us exposed and without grounds, exposed to the groundlessness of the mystery" (p.267).

Through this exploration of hermeneutic frontiers, I hope to generate an educational inquiry that allows for fruitful circlings and multiple conversations between myself and the research, between this research text and that of others, and between this inquiry and you, the reader.

1.2.2 My Phenomenological Stance

My introduction to phenomenology occurred during my first graduate course with Dr. Sheldon Rosenstock. I was only a few weeks into the course when the Faculty of Architecture asked me to supervise a student trip to New York City. I knew I would not have much time to study, so I asked Sheldon to recommend an appropriate reading for the trip. He suggested Maxine Greene's contribution to Pinar's classic reconceptualist collection, "Curriculum and consciousness". Of course I did not get to the article until the plane trip home, where perhaps because of exhaustion, I remember finding the article dense, difficult and confusing. I continued reading the article over and over again, unable to penetrate the text. Finally, intellectually exhausted, I surrendered my disbelief and like

clouds parting to reveal a blue prairie sky, the meanings unraveled. This story is like that of the phenomenon of phenomenology itself - a penetration of consciousness prefaced by resistance and followed with a new sense of awareness. As a mode of inquiry, phenomenology values and inspires human perception. According to Greene (1975):

Consciousness, being intentional, throws itself outward toward the world. It is always consciousness of something - a phenomenon, another person, an object in the world. Reflecting upon himself as a conscious object, the individual - the learner, perhaps - reflects upon his relation to the world, his manner of comporting himself with respect to it, the changing perspectives through which the world presents itself to him. (p.304)

By exploring and validating the experience of the everyday, phenomenological inquiry seeks to ignite reflectivity, and to illuminate the world through intensified sensitivities. Phenomenology celebrates vision and the artist's eye, as well as the many other ways through which we translate the world - through skin, through our senses, and through human intuition - and the ways in which that knowledge transforms us. In Abrams' (1996) words:

To touch the coarse skin of a tree is thus, at the same time, to experience one's own tactility, to feel oneself touched by the tree. And to see the world is also, at the same time, to experience oneself as visible, to feel oneself seen. Clearly a wholly immaterial mind could neither see things nor touch things - indeed could not experience anything at all. We can experience things - can touch, hear, and taste things - only because, as bodies, we ourselves are entirely a part of the sensible world that we perceive! We might as well say that we are organs of this world, flesh of its flesh, and that the world is perceiving itself through us. (p.68)

Finally, as a phenomenological inquiry, this inquiry honors the power of metaphor to convey the essences and qualities of the experiences described and to poeticize portraits of experience, sensation and feelings. The fluidity of metaphor as an imagining/imaging

device allows the author to paint personal portraits of meaning, and moreover, metaphor invites the reader to enter into phenomenological interpretations of text and of image.

According to Johnson (1987):

A metaphor is not merely a linguistic expression ... used for artistic and rhetoric purposes; instead, it is a process of human understanding by which we achieve meaningful experience that we can make sense of. A metaphor, in this "experiential" sense, is a process by which we understand and structure one domain of experience in terms of another domain of a different kind. (p.15)

1.2.3 My Artistic-Aesthetic Stance

I believe that the graduate experience has given me the language to script the feelings, sensations and knowledge that I could once only communicate pictorially. As I struggled to acquire the language that would allow me to shift from image-based to text-based expression, the voices of arts-based researchers such as Dewey (1934, 1938), Eisner (1991), Vallance (1991), and Greene (1975) provided words for me. The multiple voices and creative forms woven into Greene's work gave me permission to collage my own diverse visions and interests into my writing. Eisner and Vallance provided an organizing framework, a starting point for interpreting my research as an aesthetic act and my writings as visible records of artistic discovery and process. According to Vallance (1991), aesthetic inquiry "seeks to identify salient qualities of curriculum and render them accessible to others who need to make practical decisions" (p.162). In this form of aesthetic analysis, curriculum is metaphorically critiqued as art object. Vallance observes that these linkages are possible because both curriculum and artifact are: products of human construction; translations of knowledge into accessible forms; products of process, and modes of communication between maker and audience (p.163-64).

However, I sought an inquiry mode more akin to the experiential nature of art making; a union of aesthetic knowing and artistic expression - one where the process, the

inquiry, and the product were viewed as a whole. van Manen (1990) calls this form of integrated inquiry poeticizing, Laurence-Lightfoot and Hoffmann Davis (1997) name it portraiture, and Diamond and Mullen (1999) refer to it as arts-based inquiry. For the purpose of this writing, I adopt Greene's (1977) terminology - "artistic-aesthetic inquiry". In this form of knowledge-making, the self as artist, observer, and participant is seated at the centre of the inquiry. World is portrayed, observed, and interpreted through the self. According to Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffmann Davis (1997), "The portraitist not only uses her voice to express the outsider's stance, which looks across patterns of action and sees the whole, she also takes advantage of her position as stranger, which allows her to see through new eyes" (p.88-89). The artistic-aesthetic inquirer sees patterns emerge from chaos, new meanings from discordance, and weavings rise from fallen threads. Dewey (1934) states that:

Discord is the occasion that induces reflection, observing that artists do not shun moments of resistance and tension. He rather cultivates them, not for their own sake but because of their potentialities, bringing to living consciousness an experience that is unified and total. (p.15)

The artistic-aesthetic inquirer re-visions the lived-world. She boldly swings out into the unknown trusting her innate ability to conjure portraits of meaning. Sewell (1999) observes:

To gather, hold, and refine an image, and then to offer that image to the world is the essential work of the visionary. She sees what is possible embedded in what is real. She looks directly at what is, looking into the world and then beyond the edge of presumed reality, cultivating the power to translate between seen and unseen realms with attention and imagination. The practice of the visionary is a perceptual act. (p.20-21)



Figure 1

View to the southeast, 263 Gimli Road

December, 1999

The artifact produced through this process is an embodied vision of the experience of making meaning, yet as artifact it also has the capacity to *produce* a meaningful experience. Dewey (1934) states, "The poetic as distinct from the prosaic, esthetic art as distinct from scientific, expression as distinct from statement, does something different from leading to an experience. It *constitutes* one" (p.85). Therefore, artistic-aesthetic text is fluid in nature; it becomes alive through a spiraling transaction between creator, creator as viewer, viewer, and viewer as creator of meaning. The inquirer requires courage to retrace and revisit the work, for once thought becomes text, new levels of meaning are revealed and the inquirer is required to re-enter the interpretive dance.

Although artistic-aesthetic inquiry is deeply autobiographical, the inquirer trusts that the inquiry, like an art object, will have resonance within the human community. van Manen (1990) observes:

For the artist, as well as for the phenomenologist, the source of all work is the experiential life-world of human beings. Just as the poet or the novelist attempts to grasp the essence of some experience in literary form, so the phenomenologist attempts to grasp the essence of some experience as a phenomenological description. A genuine artistic expression is not just representational or imitational of some event in the world. Rather, it transcends the experiential world in an act of reflective existence. An artistic text differs from the world of everyday talking and acting in that it is always arrived at in a reflective mood. In other words, the artist recreates experiences by transcending them.(p.97)

Artistic-aesthetic inquiry is subjectively transparent and idealistically objective. Truthfulness or authenticity is greatest when the presentation of the text relates to the nature of the inquiry, so the inquirer makes liberal use of aesthetic language - descriptions are "thick", metaphoric, poetic and imaginative. I hope that this inquiry document will inspire rather than direct, will illuminate rather than enlighten, and finally, will reveal possibilities rather than truth. I invite you, the reader to participate in this dance.

1.3 Vision, Body, and Spirit

The path without a heart will turn against men and destroy them.

Carlos Castaneda

I cannot claim to have led a life of balance. Certain passages in my life have been dedicated to over-commitments in one sphere of being or another. During my "Carlos Castaneda" days, I was committed to a twisted interpretation of spiritual knowledge, an attempt to understand my place within the world through altered states of consciousness. For a couple years I obsessed about my blossoming young adult body, attempting to thwart the process of nature with diet pills. Some years later, a deep betrayal convinced me to reclaim my body by becoming a fitness instructor. Another year was spent in long solitary runs as I trained my body for a marathon. When I returned to art school in the 1990's, dormant creativity was re-awakened. As I reflected upon these experiences, I began to see that my life journey was much like a boat voyage where the passengers move from one side of the boat to another, leaving the vessel in a constant state of imbalance. Each foray into one sphere left sections of my being in a state of starvation. For example, the long hours in art studio meant I had little time to exercise; when I marathon trained I was too tired for creative pursuits; and most recently, I live in a state of intellectual angst caused by opening the Pandora's box of academic research. I have come to see the pursuit for balance of mind, body, and spirit as my life quest and because of that foundation of understanding, these concepts form the basis of my educational questions. For example, how do notions of mind, body and spirit relate to curriculum inquiry? Can these forms of knowledge invigorate curriculum by inspiring human holism, empowering the individual and community, and reconnecting the schism between humanity and nature?

Dewey (1997) observes, "All of these separations culminate in one between knowing and doing, theory and practice, between mind as the end and spirit of action and

the body as its organ and means" (p.209). In the chapters to follow, I will attempt to flesh out the concepts, theories, and practical implications of curriculum as vision, as body, and as spirit.

1.3.1 Curriculum Inquiry For Vision

Vision and sight are not just about seeing the external world. Curriculum as sight supposes that vision is also inwardly reflective. Merleau-Ponty (1964) observes:

The enigma is that my body simultaneously sees and is seen. That which looks at all things can also look at itself and recognize in what it sees, the "other side" of its power of looking. It sees itself seeing; it touches itself touching; it is visible and sensitive for itself. (p.162)

To see the world we must learn to penetrate the constructed self through the development of self-perception and consciousness. Beginning with the work of philosophers such as Grosz (1995, 1999), Levin (1993, 1997), and Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964), this inquiry will explore the shift in positionality of researcher, inquirer, learner and teacher from impartial observer (the objective gaze) through the gaze of the participant observer (one who is both living and reflecting upon experience) to the vision of the postmodernist - the gaze that penetrates experience, deconstructs and questions constructed fabrications and self mythologies, and that animates new visions and ways of making meaning out of the chaos that permeates the contemporary world. Levin (1997) states:

Our vision is not just a biological endowment; it is also a capacity, a potential that can be developed and realized in a number of different ways. As soon as infants open their eyes, their vision is appropriated by culture and takes part in cultural life. Vision is socially produced and tends to confirm and reproduce the culture that brought it into being. Our vision is accordingly historical, bearing within itself a past that has figured in many different narratives... . (p.9-10)

I will also examine the work of educators such as Grumet (1988, 1992), Greene (1975, 1977, 1995), and Kincheloe (1998), who see the development of the consciousness as both a curricular and a cultural imperative. Inspired by the work of artist Jennifer Barlett, visual arts critics Suzi Gablick (1991), and Lucy Lippard (1997), and arts-based educators such as Eisner (1991), Diamond and Mullen (1999), and Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffmann Davis (1997), I will attempt to illustrate how artistic-aesthetic ways of knowing can inform and enhance an interpretation of curriculum as sight. Gablik (1991) observes:

Since the enlightenment, our view of what is real has been organized around the hegemony of a technological and materialistic worldview, which has eliminated from its map of reality any means through which to keep visionary energy alive. The visionary function, which fulfills the soul's need for placing itself in the vast scheme of things, has been suppressed, with the result that as a culture we have lost the gift of vision. (p.46)

My readings of educator Muxworthy Feige (1999) in her study of the epistemology of Gregory Bateson, postmodernist William Doll (1993), and anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson (1994) demonstrate how the development of multiple viewpoints and of attentiveness to emerging patterns in nature and culture encourage a connective vision within the self and the lived world. I will reflect upon how my emerging ideas about curriculum as sight informed my own teaching practice.

According to Meadows, Meadows, & Randers (1992):

Some people, especially young people, engage in visioning with enthusiasm and ease. Some people find the exercise of visioning painful, because a glowing picture of what could be makes what *is* all the more intolerable. Some people would never admit their visions, for fear of being thought impractical or unrealistic.... And some people have been so crushed by their experience of the world that they can only stand ready to explain why any vision is impossible. (cited in Lindsay, 1999, p.197)

I too have wondered about the point in life where people cease to believe in their capacity for vision and for visioning. Could this closure of sight have grave educational and humanitarian ramifications? Reflecting on a road trip through upstate New York, environmentalist Laura Sewel (2000) observes:

It is painful to see - thousands and thousands of trees in a slow spasm of death. My impulse is to turn away, but I recall a Buddhist friend reminding me that the fundamental spiritual practice is to awaken, to notice what actually is. (p.23)

It is my belief that this notion of curriculum inquiry as vision could provide some insights on reclaiming our gift of vision.

1.3.2 Curriculum Inquiry for Body

In the spring of 2000, my father underwent surgery for lung cancer. The surgery was successful in removing the small tumor and after a period of time he was sent home. Once home, my father began to sicken and was returned to hospital. Tests revealed he had developed an antibiotic resistant infection and he was placed in isolation and medicated with large doses of antibiotics. His skin and veins became fragile and the intravenous sites painful. Visitors and medical personnel had to don masks and sterile clothing in a clean room that separated his room from the hospital corridor. The surgeon pierced my father's chest and back several times in an attempt to drain the infection. The drugs for pain and infection wreaked havoc on his sleep patterns and digestive system. Finally, after about three weeks in isolation he exploded, lashing out in anger at family and medical personnel. The hospital psychiatrist was alerted. Leder (1990) observes:

Pain engenders a further dimension of alienation that is not part of neutral or pleasure self-experience. ... In most cases pain is an unwanted and aversive phenomenon that forces itself upon us against our will. Moreover, this threatens the very routines and goals by which we define our identity. Aversive, involuntary, and disruptive, the painful body emerges as a foreign thing. (p.77)

Latter that day as I listened to my father describe his shame and helplessness, I noticed his feet and hands were dry and swollen. The following day, I smuggled in some fronds from my aloe plant and administered the slimy substance to his extremities, delicately massaging the tender flesh. This intervention seemed to soothe and calm him, so I continued this ritual for the duration of his hospital stay. According to Rorty (1989):

All that is required to act well is to do what artists are good at - noticing things that most other people do not notice, being curious about what others take for granted, seeing the momentary iridescence and not just the underlying formal structure. The curious, sensitive artist will be the paradigm of morality because he is the only one who always notices everything (p.158-159).

I observed that while my father was in isolation, everyone who touched him inflicted physical distress. His constant state of pain and the continual administration of pain must have temporarily divorced my father from his sense of control and sanity. Those who tended him appeared to distance themselves from the pain they inflicted. Perhaps this sort of emotional bracketing was caused by exhaustion from chronic healthcare underfunding and understaffing, or perhaps it was a vocational requirement, a form of buffering used to protect oneself from constant exposure to human suffering.

For me, these observations required interpretation and action, indeed echoing Leder (1990) who observes, "In the hermeneutical moment, suffering gives rise to a search for interpretation and understanding" (p.78). Later, that autumn, as my father and I walked together in a nearby river park, we spoke again of this incident. I shared my observations and reflections, and in response, my father wept.

Recent philosophical writing, postmodern theory and most recently curriculum inquiry, have begun to explore the separation of body from mind in contemporary discourse. Eagleton (1990) observes that, "A recovery of the importance of the body has been one of the most precious achievements of recent radical thought" (p.7). Philosophers such as David Levin (1993, 1997), Elizabeth Grosz (1999), and Drew Leder (1990),

suggest that the "hegemony of vision" (Levin, 1993) in modern western discourse has led to a discursive deficiency of body knowledge and understanding. According to McWilliams (1996):

Whether scholars come to blame Descartes or Rousseau for the prevalence of a mind/body dualism in Western scholarship, the fact remains that, in the history of Western thought, a mind/body dichotomy has privileged the mind as that which defines human "being", while the body has been interrogated as the excess baggage of human agency. (p.16)

Merleau-Ponty (1964) observes that, "Visible and mobile, my body is a thing among things; it is caught in the fabric of the world" (p.163). Our lived-worlds are not constructed by vision alone, but through experiential weavings of sound and scent, of taste and of the press of our flesh upon the world. Merleau-Ponty (1964), Hall (1969), Johnson (1987), and Montagu (1978) each offer rich sensual descriptions of human hapticity and corporeality. Johnson (1987) observes:

... we have bodies connected to the natural world, such that our consciousness and rationality are tied to our bodily orientations and interactions in and with our environment. Our embodiment is essential to who we are, to what meaning is, and to our ability to draw rational inferences and to be creative. (p.xxxviii)

A recent article in the Globe and Mail explores how our culture's "climate of anxiety" regarding child abuse and pornography has led to a state of repressed intimacy between children and adults (2001, p.R1). As children spend increased portions of their daily lives in institutions and non-parentally supervised activities, our cultural aversion to touch could have long term social effects. According to Montague (1986), "We in the Western world are beginning to discover our neglected senses. This growing awareness represents something of an overdue insurgency against the painful deprivation of sensory experience we have suffered in our technologized world" (Pallasmaa, 2000, p.78).

Research by Pallasmaa (2000), Papenek (1995), and Franck (1998) highlights how

attentiveness to bodies and senses can imbue human environments and experiences with authenticity and haptic delight. An examination of the work of curricularists such as Jagodiski (1992), Shapiro (1999), Snowber (1999), and Stinson (1995) will introduce ideas about the body in curriculum inquiry as a theoretical concept as well as a physical entity. I will also reflect upon my experiences with kinesthetic curriculum, both as learner and as teacher. Shapiro (1999) states, "Critical awareness must enter new territories in order to address the overriding emphasis in institutions of education on valuing the knowing mind, which continually denies the knowing of the heart and of the body" (p.28).

1.3.3 Curriculum Inquiry for Spirit

A stroll in late March to a nearby traffic corridor leads me down a lane littered with abandoned cars and misplaced trash. The grey sky exacerbates the filth of early spring and the flowing waters are thick with rubble from crumbling concrete. As I approach the sidewalk that parallels busy Pembina Highway, I shout over the traffic sounds, reminding my companion that we are fortunate to have sidewalks in our inner city neighborhood, for grim as they may be, in new neighborhoods, sidewalks are no longer considered a community necessity. Along the boulevard, the emerging grasses are choked with road grit and garbage. I seek a pattern in the refuse, and observe that the trash is primarily abandoned fast food packaging, as quickly discarded as it was obtained.

This is not a portrait of landscape that invigorates the soul. It is a description of a spiritually bereft environment which, from one perspective, bears the inevitable wear and tear of a prairie winter; but from another, reflects the effrontery of a careless society. Is it such a long way from callous littering to systematic industrial pollution of human and natural environments? Does a simple walk in one's neighborhood highlight that which a high-paced, "high-tech", vehicular-centered lifestyle obscures? Snowber (1999) observes, "We live in a world that thrives on an accelerated pace of life, consumerism and

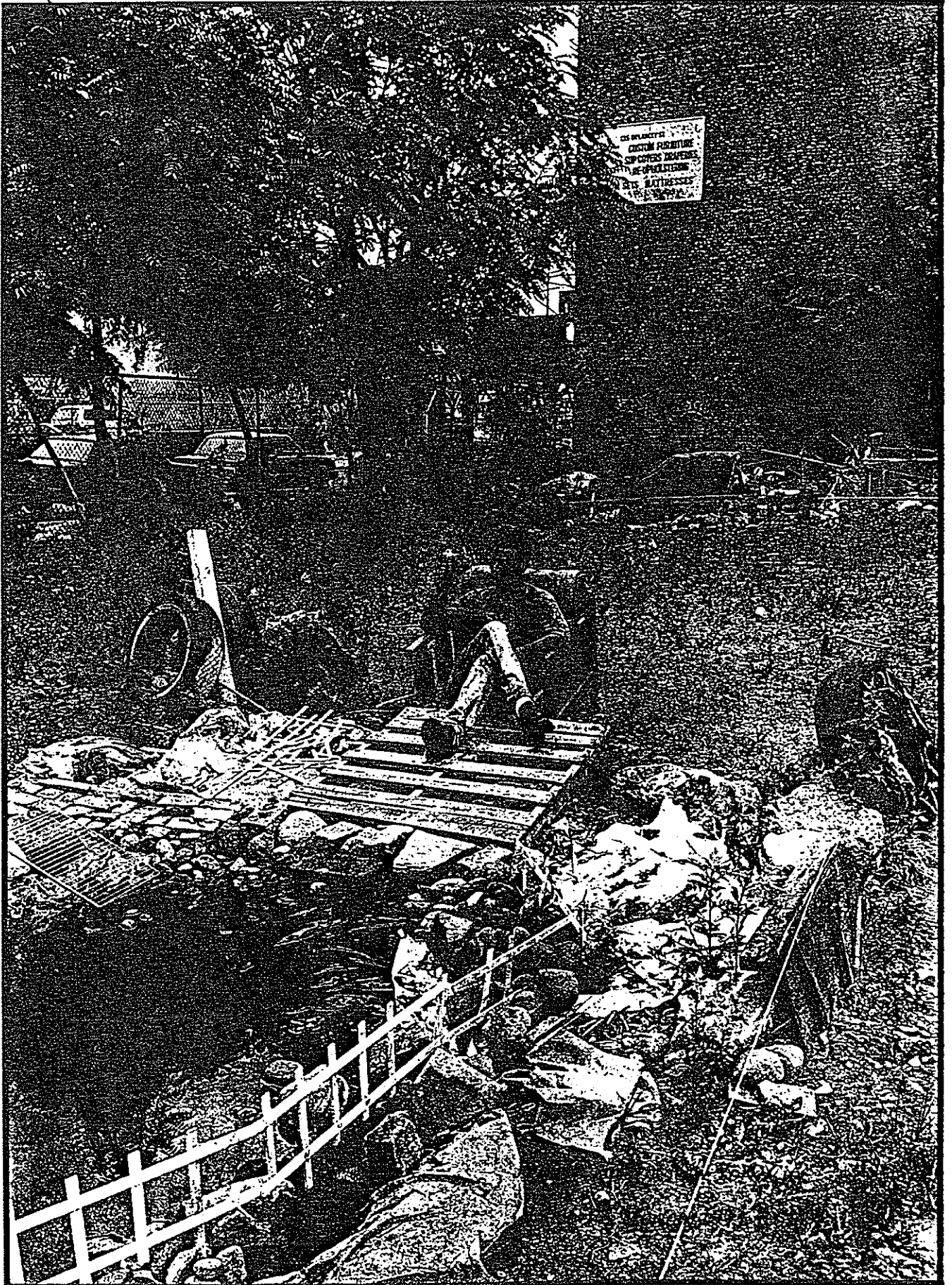
production, more than the art of being, an environment not conducive to listening to the organic rhythm of our bodies' pulses" (p.18).

A quick glance in my Webster's informs me that the word "spirit" was born of the Latin "spiritus" which means "breath". Because I connect my own sense of spirituality to particular geographies, I reflect upon how this word "spiritus" relates to how I feel completed and connected in certain places. For example, I breathe when surrounded by Lake Winnipeg's vast vista of sky and water, I breathe on my daily morning walk through a nearby river park and I breathe as I toil in my garden. Hejduk (1996) observes:

I breathe because it keeps me alive. But there is a more important reason. Because when I breathe the air in I breathe in all the sounds from all the voices since the beginning of time. All the voices that have placed thoughts into the air. That is, thoughts escaping from the soul through the voice into the air which I breathe in. Sounds that I cannot hear. Silent sounds filling the air that generations have spoken into, consequently filling me with worlds that are an invisible text, an invisible sounding text which mingles my thoughts that are invisible. In essence an internal communion takes place giving the sense of the sublimity of silent transferences.

(p.21)

Gardens are wonderful places to breathe. Plants absorb the by-product of human breath - carbon dioxide - just as we inhale plants' reciprocal gift of oxygen. The experience of the powerful images in Balmori and Morton (1993), Transitory Gardens, Uprooted Lives, opened my mind to a new understanding of the powerful human need for spiritual places, for places to breathe. I learned that even homeless people craved gardens, that they constructed gardens, and this knowledge forged new definitions of the meaning of gardens for me. Gardens express a human need for connectivity. I believe that this need to commune with the earth is an essential dimension of human spirituality. According to Cooper Marcus (1995):



The garden is a place where matter is transformed from one state to another. It is a potent symbol for what many believe is happening to humankind - a transformation of consciousness in which spiritual and global perspectives are emerging organically from the necessary but partial perspective of ego and nation state. (p.32)

Another dimension of spirituality is the need for human connectivity - for nurturing of mutual understanding through caring thought and action. Samples (1999) observes, "The human soul is the sacred connection to all life and the world that sustains it, to our membership in the human family, and within the spirit of our personhood. Fulfilling this sacred connection is the promise of evolution" (p.199). Miller (1999) writes of education for the human soul, observing that contemplative educational practices such as journaling, visualization, dream analysis and the arts provide a "curriculum for the inner life" (p.215).

Finally, I define spirituality as the cultivation of a meaningful life. Caputo (1987) speaks about *Gelassenheit* - "openness to the mystery". He observes:

The idea is to honor the divine spark within all of us, or the law, or whatever superstructure one wants to invoke, in order to name the life which flows in and through others and us, to let all of us be the being which we are, to release us all from manipulation and control and treat "the beings which we ourselves are" with respect. (p.267)

I believe that spirituality, like education, is life-long journey, not a destination. Spirituality is a search for meaning and place. Spirituality is reaching, and stretching, and almost touching; trusting and "opening up to the mystery". Spirituality is breath. Purpel (1999) states, "As educators, we need to ground our work in a vision that in some significant way, resonates with what matters most and is of the most profound nature, to matters of cosmology, religion, and spirituality" (p.62).

Pollution, habitat destruction, the loss of natural and human diversity, the appalling care of our sick and elderly, the cultural proliferation of weapons, of crime and of murder, are all evidence of a society unhitched from spirituality. And learning institutions, as our

most prevalent cultural filter, must assume some blame for this state of spiritual disruption and bankruptcy. The cultivation of spirituality could be attained through a curriculum which values attentiveness, imagination, and contemplation - curriculum which invites learners to breathe. Muxworthy Feige (1999) states:

An education for greed, alienation, and control is transformed by an education for story, aesthetic at its center, dancing rather than processing, alive rather than dead, seamless rather than fragmented. Thinking becomes an experience. Not a deed, not a product. But an engagement, a commitment to the why of the why, to digging behind the bushes into the earth, into a realm where no such thing as a thing exists. (p.106)

Curriculum which severs mind from body; which favours skill acquisition over critical thought; and which advocates predictable outcomes over interpretation may be incapable of creating a caring, connective citizenry. According to Meadows, Meadows, & Randers, "A sustainable world can never come into being if it cannot be envisioned. The vision must be built from the contributions of many people before it is complete and compelling..." (1992, cited in Lindsay, 1999, p.209).

Curriculum inquiry which celebrates our imaginative self, and which fosters caring towards human and natural communities, potentializes a paradigmatic shift from a fragmented world view to a spiritual consciousness of deep sensitivity and empowered, informed action. According to Greene (1995):

We should think of education as opening public spaces in which students, speaking in their own voices and acting on their own initiatives, can identify themselves and choose themselves in relation to such principles as freedom equality, justice, and concern for others. We can hope to communicate the recognition that persons become more fully themselves and open to the world if they can be aware of themselves appearing before others, speaking in their own voices, and trying as they do to bring about a common world (p.68).

1.3.4 Embodied Enactment: The Garden

I have stated that, in this sort of inquiry there is an expectation that the form of the inquiry will reflect the content. In this spirit, I have been issued a challenge - to provide an embodied enactment of these notions of vision, body, and spirit in curriculum inquiry. In response, I offer a garden. I believe that gardens are meaningful metaphors for curriculum and for curriculum inquiry. I quote here from a paper that I wrote previously on this fruitful pairing:

This paper explores the notion of the garden as a metaphor for curriculum and for curriculum inquiry, because like curriculum, the garden is primarily a social construct which reflects the intent of the maker and the prevailing cultural ideologies of the time. The lived experiences of the person within both curriculum and garden are a synthesis of orchestrated and phenomenological experiences. The garden and the curriculum employ a common interpretive stance by referencing the artistry of creation within an aesthetic of experience.

Within this hermeneutic relationship lies the potential for moving dreams and visions from private contemplation to public interpretation. Gardens, like curriculum, can be rigorously planned, plucked and nurtured, leaving as little as possible to happenstance; alternatively, they can be wild, left completely to the hands of nature. The garden and curriculum invite participation through physical movement, intellectual engagement and creative imagination. At their best, each can awaken the senses, provide delight, evoke love; at their worst, provoke hatred, prejudice and terror. (Wilson Baptist, 2000, p.4)

I purchased property on Lake Winnipeg in the winter of 2000 from an elderly woman who could no longer care for it. The property is small, only 50'x80' and is harsh and neglected. While there is an abundance of trees (approximately 50) on the property, many have been terribly pruned, some are diseased and all are filled with dead and dying branches. The landscape contains very few shrubs, so there is little in the way of

So much to conceal, to reveal.

I am entranced by the interior contents of
the fat rose hips I gathered at the corner park

Encased in fat burgandy flesh

Dissection reveals fawn colored hairy seeds

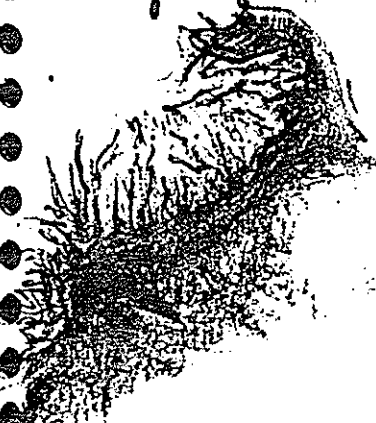
Almost like tarantula legs.

When they were moist they glistened @ water vapor.

The seeds were wrapped in their embrace.

What is the meaning of the fine, thick protection.

The seeds were hard inside - are they meant to be
digested?



**T & T
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679 Jubilee Ave
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Web site: www.ttseeds.mb.ca
E-mail: orders@ttseeds.mb.ca

Order #	Cust #	Date
05021	296046	02/07/2001

Ordered.....	91.80	Visa Card.....	101.67
Less Discount.....	9.18		
Handling Charges.....	7.00	Net Remitted.....	101.67
PST.....	5.78		
GST.....	6.27		
Net Order.....	101.67	Balance (Over/Under)..	0.00

SEED & SUNDRIES - Shipped Immediately

Ursinia "T & T Gold"	1000 ✓	0.00
T & T's Seed Starter Kit	2x 3004 ✓	23.90

PERENNIALS & NURSERY - Shipped Planting Time

Aconitium Stainless Steel	3x 7018	23.25
Hosta Ginko Craig 1 root	7044	7.95
Hosta Fire & Ice 1 rt	7052	14.95
Heliopsis Lights of Lodden	3x 7055	17.25
Hosta Albo	7057	4.50

Figure 3

Journal entry, March 31, 2001

transitions between the mature trees and the hard earth below. The yard is bounded by a public walkway and busy Gimli Road to the west, additional cottage properties to the north and south, and Lake Winnipeg to the east. The process of planning for this garden - decisions such as choosing appropriate plants and functions for the site, considerations of cultural and physical geographies, and enhancing the existing strengths of the site - all fall within the guiding principles of this inquiry: Vision, body, and spirit.

Gardens are places of dualities; of planning and of chaos; of practicalities and of wonder. For Francis and Hester (1995):

Gardens have special meanings. They are powerful settings for human life, transcending time, place and culture. Gardens are mirrors of ourselves, reflections of sensual and personal experiences. By making gardens, using or admiring them and dreaming them we create our own idealized order of nature and culture. (p.2)

This is an invitation to participate in my journey, sharing in the record of my research, planning, and the enactment of this idealized interpretation of nature, culture and curriculum. The imaginings that have emerged from this inquiry are not predictable. As I spin a web of meaning between these concepts of vision, body, and spirit, and of gardens, I hope to generate compassion for a re-imagined curriculum that welcomes dreams and visions; a curriculum that honors our senses and that engages our bodies; and a curriculum which connects to ourselves, to our communities, and to the earth. I conclude with thoughts from Italo Calvino (1974):

Everything I see and do assumes meaning in a mental space where the same calm reigns as here, the same penumbra, the same silence streaked by the rustling of leaves. At the moment when I concentrate and reflect, I find myself here again, always in this garden, at this hour of the evening, in your august presence, although I continue, without a moment's pause, moving up a river green with crocodiles or counting the barrels of salted fish being lowered into the hold. (p.103)

March 31, 2001

Beginnings: Started seeds today. Most are destined for the new gardens at the lake property and were gathered from various locations around the city and the countryside last autumn. Throughout the winter they have resided in the freezer.

Over the next few months this garden will come into being, just as this inquiry will emerge from months of research, years of learning, decades of living. I am hoping that each will inform the other, the making of garden and the making of inquiry weaving together to create something wonderful. The development of each will be chronicled through image and thought, research text and journal writing. I hope to become less self-conscious about my creative language (which I often try to hide), but which has been formed, as I have been formed, by years spent in linear environments, living as an outsider. The gift and the curse. I sketch the seed casings, observing the wonder of the protective cavities. I struggle, I'm rusty, I'm immobilized by expectation. The act of drawing is agonizing. My awkwardness fills me with doubt, both for the moment and for the journey. Oh, the horrific struggle to capture natural form and the complexity of the object - a mere seed pod, or is it a miraculous seed pod? How can we even begin to believe we can control nature or even begin to understand ... Resistance and surrender in depiction and in research. Look. The structure of the seed chambers are like bones, others like lurid flesh. Sometimes I don't even look, I just become lost in the rhythm of making. The circling of experience. I am shoved into my past again by the challenge to find a medium to express - holistic, natural, artistic, knowing in curriculum inquiry. Am I afraid of the journey? Afraid of beginning and completing, and yet I know that there is no completion, no beginning, only circlings.

Planting list



27 4 rows of clay lilies
gathered at rowing club located near Churchill school in Autumn of 2000

27 2 rows of mystery lilies
gathered from garden in Fall of 2000
Most of the seed pods rotted because of the humidity of summer 2000.
I am told that these seeds can either be happy accidents or sheils.

2 rows of Roses
gathered from "peanut park" at the end of Jubilee. Former site of Rocco station.

27 4 wild plums (1 row)
gathered on morning walk on Churchill Drive in autumn of 2000
I believe these are the least likely to germinate because of the hardness of shells.



27 1 row of mountain ash.
difficult to tell if there is even a seed in the berry - Just planted the mash.

Oh high expectations
The act of attempting
discuss
agonizing
I'm rusty
& my machetes
filled me @
doubt for the
moment & the
journey -
I'm amazed
by the beautiful
forms of the
seed pods but
the effort to
capture them
is distressing!

27 1 row of mystery berry - 3 chamber seed.
suspect a shrubby from the lake.

27 2 rows of poppies -
gathered from the garden probably 2 years ago
as this years seed heads rotted.

27 2 rows of pumpkins
could be fun to plant in the rocks at the lake
or on the south side of the cottage

27 2 rows of Delphiniums from Doris & Henry's garden in Saratoga.
seed might be 2 old to "take"

27 3 rows of peppers - Hot peppers (cooking seed)
Sweet peppers (Red pepper from fridge) - Figure 4
Little red pepper - (Bell shaped seasoning)
Journal entry, March 31, 2001

Chapter 2 • Curriculum Inquiry as Vision

Through vision, we touch the stars and the sun.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

April 1, 2001

Snow.

Doubt and difficulty. The "triforcation" of this inquiry causes me difficulty. The notion of embodiment encapsulates all that I'm trying to say. Shall I make peace by acknowledging that the divisions of mind, body, and spirit are but devices to organize my thought and actions, just so that I might corral the mass of research I must delve in to. This is the day I must begin Chapter Two, time to shelve this doubt and uncertainty and dive into it. Curriculum as sight means learning to penetrate surfaces.

In the beginning there was light ...

Each day that I drive to work, I pass a small personal care home on Pembina Highway. One can barely notice the facility; it sits back from the street, and is dwarfed by larger neighbors - a sprawling hotel complex and a tall apartment tower. My aunt Mary-Anne lives there. Two years ago, while dining with her son and his girlfriend in Toronto, she suffered a massive brain aneurysm. She barely survived the emergency surgery and when she emerged from the coma that followed, she had lost approximately one quarter of her brain function and was paralyzed on the right side of her body. Mary-Anne moved to the Fort Garry Care Home in May of 2000. Her son, now 23 years old, was her only family in Toronto, whereas here in Winnipeg, she has a sister, a brother, in-laws, an aunt and uncle, nieces, and her mother, who is almost 93 years old. What remains of Mary-Anne's memory operates in strange ways. For example, she remembers that she smokes and that she enjoys a generous martini (on the rocks). However, she recalls nothing of the stroke and has no consciousness of her physical and mental condition. Some days she

knows that she is living in Winnipeg, others she believes herself to be institutionalized in Toronto, and demands to be returned to her home in Thornhill. On several occasions, Mary-Anne has escaped from the care home. She sits by the door, waiting for a careless visitor to leave the door ajar and then once free, somehow propels her wheelchair down the sidewalk. It was her birthday on May 2. She was 62 years old.

Of late, my mother, an active member of the so-called "sandwich generation" - women who care for both aging parents and younger children or grandchildren - is stretched thin by the strain of extended caregiving. She has asked for my assistance, "Just stop in and see Mary-Anne on your way home from work. She has no sense of time; you can just visit for a short time, and she won't know the difference." However, in the year that Mary-Anne has lived there, I have only visited twice. The last time I stopped in, it was dinner time. The residents gathered four to a table. Nobody spoke. Music from a small tape player sitting atop an upright piano filled the silence while cheerful care-givers delivered steaming trays of food. I had to ask a worker to point out Mary-Anne to me in the room. I could not tell her apart from the other residents, many of whom must be ten or twenty years her senior. She sat crumpled in her wheelchair; her eyes were closed. She asked me how long I was going to be in Toronto.

Today I passed a shiny green pop can, discarded on the sidewalk. Someone had enjoyed the contents and then, their thirst quenched, dropped the can to the ground. I wonder about their callous disregard, how they cannot see that it is their responsibility to deliver this can to the waste receptacle fifteen feet distant, or better yet, to the recycle bin twenty-five feet away. I walk past it too, and as I do, I ponder the distance between the pop can and Mary-Anne and me. Meadows, Meadows, & Randers (1992) observe:

Vision without action is useless. But action without vision does not know where to go or why to go there. Vision is absolutely necessary to guide and motivate action. More than that, vision, when widely shared and firmly kept in sight, brings into being new systems. (cited in Lindsay, 1999, p.197)

2.1 When I Say Vision, Do I Mean Visibility?

I draw a circle of connectivity between the pop can, Mary-Anne, and me because I see them as exemplars for concepts of visibility and invisibility. I can vividly recall details of the dining hall in the care home, or the shape of Mary-Anne's crumpled body in her wheelchair. I also remember the sun-glow metallic gleam of the shiny green can. Yet I passed by each today. They were invisible to me. According to Levin (1997) seeing:

... means learning not to shut our eyes to that which we would rather not see. It means learning to look with a steady and calm gaze that does not willfully impose its images on what it beholds, but lets what is present and visible show itself from out of itself. (p.14)

Re-visioning the rift between what is seen and unseen is the essence of what is educationally important about learning to see. According to Ezrahi (1997):

Seeing, moreover, is not just doing. It is also undergoing. We are not only participating in creating what we see but are also transformed by our experience of seeing. One's eye is not fundamentally different from the eye of the artist or the scientist, which is remade in each act of making. One's eye is guided by ones' position, interests, and feelings to select, simplify, clarify, abridge, and organize the materials of visual experience in particular ways. These visual experiences in turn shape the future expectations, orientations, and selections of the observing eye. There is no seeing without acts of not seeing, of ignoring, as well as abstracting, of arranging the initial scattered, chaotic visual materials encountered. (p.324)

Curriculum inquiry as vision is about acknowledging the dichotomy between visibility and invisibility. It is concerned with learning to channel our gaze towards pain, poverty and pollution, thinking and acting upon our vision, rather than looking away. Further, curriculum inquiry as vision requires us to perceptually penetrate the self-myths and cultural constructions which might obstruct or distort our vision. Curriculum which cleaves learner from learning, and learning from life, facilitates a positionality of

fragmentation and separation. We have witnessed the backlash of those who believe themselves to be isolated from the schooling. Recall the murders committed in Tabor, Alberta, in Ecole Polytechnique, and in Columbine, Colorado. In each case the executioners were angry outcasts, visible and invisible to classmates and society.

Tragically, there have been additional incidents since. According to Slattery (1995):

If the curriculum ignores sedimented perceptors, identity formation, and social construction and suppresses individual visions and dreams in the content and context of education, and if individuals are constantly required to conform to someone else's worldview, then either dreams will be repressed, hope will be suppressed, people will incorporate the other's vision of themselves into their own self-understanding, and/or they will lash out in anger against those systems that exclude their voice. (p.135)

The development of a "seeing" self is optimized by curriculum that favours subjectivity - an acknowledgement of the symbiotic relationship between knowing and the known - over objectivity, a state of separation between object and subject. Grosz (1995) suggests that such a genesis of vision is optimized by the conception of a non-fragmented self intertwined into the fabric of space and time.

For the subject to take up a position as a subject, he must be able to situate himself as being located in the space occupied by his body. This anchoring of subjectivity in *its* body is the condition of coherent identity, and, moreover, the condition under which the subject has a perspective on the world, becomes the point from which vision emanates. (p.89)

Merleau-Ponty (1964) observes, "We are always immersed in the world and perceptually present to it." (p.xvii) To maximize our visionary possibilities as beings-in-the-world, we must remove the ideological blinders which prevent us from viewing ourselves as connected to ourselves, to others and to nature. According to Doll (1993) the "epistemology of experience" is an interplay between the knower (learner) and the known

(the self): "Consciousness, particularly reflective consciousness - which turns both inward to the self and outward to society - is an intellectual tool humans use to effect this transaction" (p.126). This epistemological transaction between inner (self) and outer (world) knowledge is as much about learning to penetrate one's self-consciousness, as it is about lifting the cloak of invisibility from that which we choose not to see.

April 2, 2001

I see a reference for a book in the Globe Review of Books by Elizabeth Hay, a scholar of weather. I'm tempted by the review to drive over to the local bookseller and purchase a copy. I'm reminded of how I constantly deny myself the pleasure of literature when I'm immersed in academic research, even though I know from my studies that this form of reading need not be a separate experience, that it can be integrated into my writing. But by the end of a day of struggling to balance work, study, writing and the nuances of daily life, I'm tired of seeking integration. I just want to turn off my awareness (or at least allow it to be dormant for an hour or two!). Does mindfulness require constant vision?

David Levin (1997) calls human vision "tragic", noting that vision is "the gift of a natural power, a natural capacity for perceptual responsiveness, that it is our responsibility to question and educate, working with the nature we have been given to construct out of the materials a different vision" (p.1). Levin's statement turns my thoughts towards the experience of art school, and I reflect on the frustration of learning to make the visions in my head become visible on canvas. Because I completed my fine arts education in my mid-thirties, I was highly cognizant of the frustrating process of the awakening of artistic vision. My first painting was stiff and awkward - a series of circles executed on a small piece of paper. I can still call up an image of it in my mind. They looked like Easter eggs! By the time that I finished my thesis two years later, I was working on large 6x8' sheets of unstretched canvas. My mind was so creatively charged with imagery that I found inspiration everywhere. I collaged scenes from the streets, visual constructions of shared stories, and deeply autobiographical symbols and images into my work. I learned that the

visual acuity of an artist is not something that rises to consciousness unbidden. Dewey (1934) observes:

Perception replaces bare recognition. There is an act of reconstructive doing, and consciousness becomes fresh and alive. This act of seeing involves the cooperation of motor elements even though they remain implicit and do not become overt, as well as cooperation of all funded ideas that may serve to complete the new picture that is forming. (p.53)

Learning to see requires practice, risk-taking, and a deliberate awakening of conscious perception. According to Gablik (1991), "...vision that is truly engaged with the world is not purely cognitive, or purely aesthetic, but is opened up to the body as a whole ..." (p.100).

For Merleau-Ponty (1964) and those inspired by his phenomenological philosophies, (Grosz, 1995, Levin, 1997, Grumet, 1988 and Greene, 1995), vision is an integrated human capacity that emerges from the world of lived experience. This positionality suggests that vision is participatory and engaged, rather than detached and observatory; that vision is deeply subjective, emerging from experience and consciousness and not through the impartial "external perspective of the observer" (Habermas, in Levin, 1997, p.6). According to Abrams (1996):

By asserting that perception, phenomenologically considered, is inherently participatory, we mean that perception always involves, at its most intimate level, the experience of an active interplay, or coupling, between the perceiving body and that which it perceives (p.57).

Yet this was not always so. A great deal of contemporary philosophy concerns itself with the genesis of a "hegemony of vision" (Levin, 1997). The hegemony of vision is defined as an "epistemological privileging of reifying and totalizing vision, a gaze of domination" (Habermas, in Levin, 1997, p.6). For postmodern scholars (for example Fuery, 1997; Doll, 1993; Foster, 1988; Gablick, 1991) these words characterize the

modern gaze which has permeated western culture for the past six centuries. One paradigmatic characterization of the modern gaze emerged during the Renaissance with the development of perspectival space. Perspectival recording of space favoured the eye of the artist at the center of a perceptual horizon, and controlled the point of view of the spectator. Fuery (1997) observes, "But what perspective really does is create a position of preferred reading. That is it locates the position from which the text is supposed to be viewed and so aims to control the gaze" (p.77). Therefore, by this definition, the modernist gaze emerges as a reifying description of positionality. In a variety of disciplines, this positionality is seen as favouring a dominant, white, patriarchal viewpoint which has controlled western society politically, aesthetically, and intellectually (Gablik, 1991; Doll, 1993; Bhabha, 1994; Lather, 1991). Educationally, this concept is enacted in settings which favour teacher as source of knowledge and learner as vessel to be filled. According to Doll (1993):

In the modernist paradigm, understanding and meaning are based on an assumed invariance and on our possessing the ability to "see" that which is, that which is invariant. Here the teacher takes his task as that of presenting what is clear, and of admonishing the student to "look sharp". In fact, understanding is ascertained by asking whether the student "sees" what is being explained. (p.150-151)

While the development of perspectival space paints a portrait of positionality of the modern gaze, philosophers of many disciplines (Gablik, 1991; in visual art; Doll, 1993, in curriculum studies; Bhabha, 1994, post-colonial theory; Foster, 1988, critical arts theory; Levin, 1997, philosophy) credit eighteenth century philosopher Rene Descartes with textually calibrating the doctrine of the modern gaze. This emerges clearly through his four rules to direct the revelation of truth and reason:

First Rule: Accept only that which presents itself to the mind "so clearly and distinctly" that its truth is self-evident.

Second Rule: Divide each difficulty "into as many parts as possible" for an easier solution.

Third Rule: "Think in an orderly fashion," as did the geometers of old with their "long chains of reasoning," always proceeding by gradual degrees, from that which is "simplest and easiest to understand" to the more complex.

Fourth Rule: Review all the foregoing to be "certain that nothing is omitted."

(cited in Doll, 1991, p.30)

In the positivist modern paradigm, personal feelings, emotions, intuition and experience are not favoured as legitimate forms of knowledge. Foster (1988) observes, "Cartesian perspectivalism which separates subject and object, renders the first transcendental and the second inert, and so subtends metaphysical thought, empirical science, and capitalist logic all at once ..." (p. x). According to Doll (1991) the enduring educational endowment of Descartes is one of fragmentation - a division of teacher from student, of knowing from known and, of self from other. He connects this legacy with the continued pervasiveness of the "Tyler Rational". The Tyler Rational was first explicated by Ralph Tyler in 1949, at the height of the postwar scientific rationalist movement (see Schubert, 1986, p.171) and is a means of structuring curriculum through predetermined objectives, and controlled experiences, organizational structures and evaluation methodologies.

While postmodernism is well characterized by philosopher Richard Rorty's (1979) metaphor of "multiple horizons", suggesting a paradigmatic kaleidoscope of viewpoints, the modern vision favours an objectively controlling eye, projecting learning as linear and hierarchical in nature, and knowledge production as gender and race exclusive (male and white). The boundaries between right and wrong are clearly delineated. Quantifiable methodologies are favoured over qualitative epistemologies. Disciplines are ranked, favouring science over art and measurement over intuition. Monotheist doctrines are preferred over multiple interpretations of human spirituality. Gablik (1991) observes, "One of the particular developments in our Western world is that we are losing our sense of the divine side of life, the power of imagination, myth, dream and vision" (p.42).

Imagine the modern vision as an edifice, a solitary monolith upon the landscape, or as a Barnett Newman painting, such as his modernist masterpiece, *Voice of Fire*. This painting characterizes well the modern gaze, isolated, individualistic and iconic. While new paradigms in human creativity have never failed to incite criticism from the public, the American abstract painting movement, in particular, Newman's work seems one of the most successful in forcing an ideological schism between the public and the art world. When the National Gallery paid 1.8 million dollars for this painting in 1989, the Canadian public was outraged (Barber, Guilbaut & O'Brian, 1996). Some farming friends of mine, in a delightfully ironic postmodern gesture, painted their postbox in characteristic red and black stripes. Yet, Harold Rosenberg (1978), modernist critic, suggests that Newman's work was mystical, rooted in symbolism and embodying the very nature of life and death. He states:

He had circumvented the humanistic and relativistic art of the Greco-Renaissance tradition in order to arrive in theory at an art of absolute relations. The banning of images of man and his myths made it possible to affirm a reality of feeling without figurative content. A Newman such as *Cathedra*, 1951, or *Voice of Fire*, 1967, puts it squarely to the spectator to discover within himself whether religious or heroic associations are any longer needed in order to experience awe and tranquility. (p.32)

For Newman, it is enough for a painting to be a saturation of color, it is enough to be red, or blue, black, or combinations of all three. The physical gestures of the artist and the physical evidence of process, so important to the postmodern audience, are minimized in Newman's work, and further audience interpretation is neither solicited nor required. Rosenberg (1978) observes, "We have seen that the ultimate subject of Newman's painting is himself - not the biographical self of neighborhoods lived in, schools attended, people met, jobs held" ... (p.67). Viewer is positioned as spectator and stranger, not as participant.

Figure 5

Barnett Newman, 1967, Voice of Fire

Acrylic on canvas, 214 x 96" (Rosenberg, 1978, plate 102)

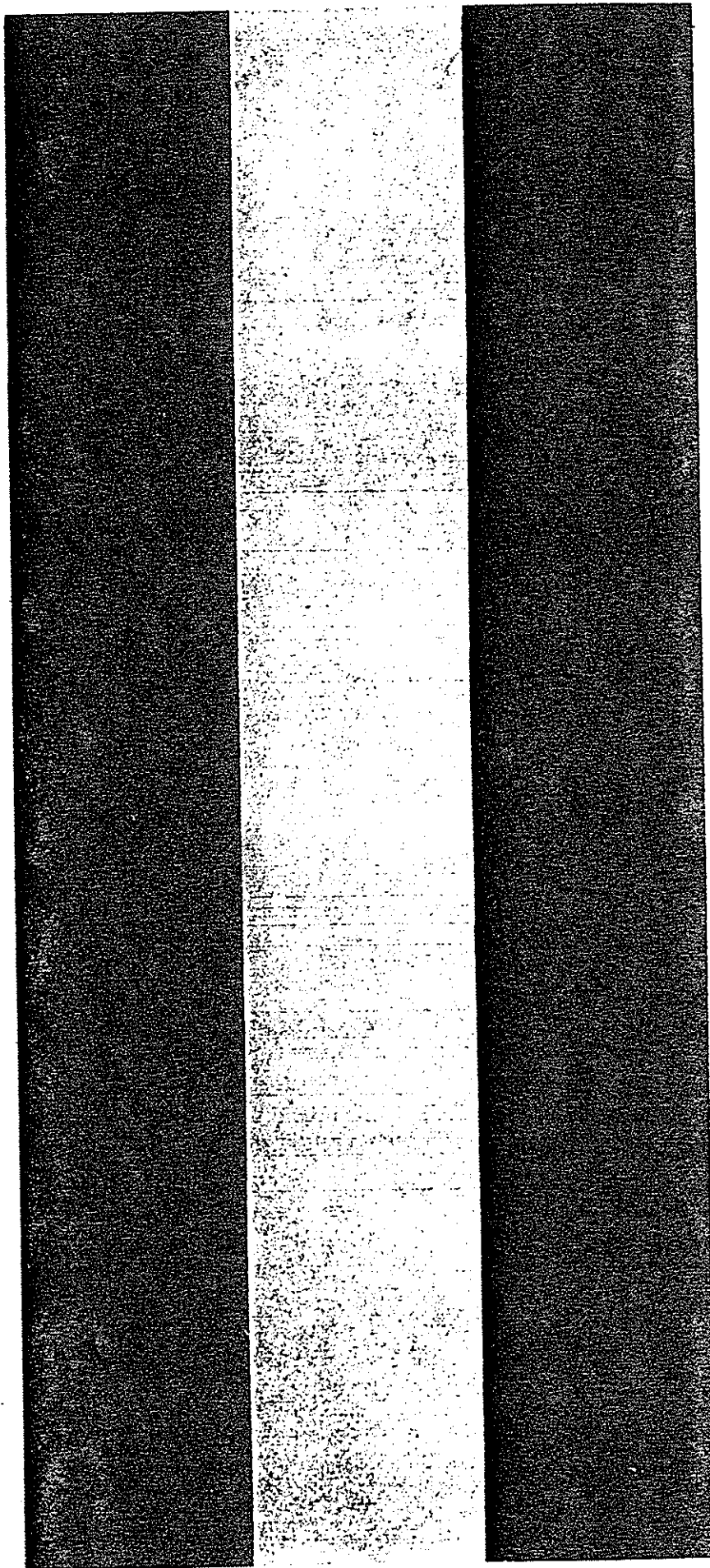


Figure 6

"What are you, blind?"

Tommy Unger, 'Herman', Globe and Mail, 7 April 1990

(Barber, Guilbaut, & O'Brian, 1996, plate 17)



**"What are you, blind? You hung it
upside down!"**

Figure 6

"What are you, blind?"

Tommy Unger, 'Herman', *Globe and Mail*, 7 April 1990

(Barber, Guilbaut, & O'Brian, 1996, plate 17)

In contrast, Jennifer Bartlett's body of work *In the Garden* is an interpretive record of her visual experience while on retreat in the South of France. In the autumn of 1979, she rented a villa in Nice, France, imagining sun filled days of creativity. In reality, the villa was neglected and the weather dreary.

She sat in the memorably hideous house, she looked out at the windswept, frost-nipped garden, and she began to count the blessings, such as they were, of her situation. In her dining room she had a window that reached down to the ground. Through it she saw the garden. (Russell, in Bartlett, 1982, p.5)

What followed Bartlett's residency was a prolific series of garden drawings in a variety of media. She worked on the drawings for fifteen months. Some works were executed on site in Nice and others were drawn from memory after Bartlett returned to California. In experiencing the drawings, the viewer is invited to interpret the garden through Bartlett's shifting perspectives, and is granted access to the visionary processes of the artist. In drawing after drawing, Bartlett re-interprets the landscape of Nice, continually revising the possibilities of site, of technique, of materials and of vision. This is a painterly example of the visual shift from the edifice-like modernist gaze of Newman to a postmodern multi-perspectival gaze. This gaze, as with Bartlett's drawings, embraces multiple interpretations, recordings, and definitions of place and time.

But the powers of the modern gaze are strong and difficult to unseat. In April of 2001, the eyes of the western hemisphere were turned towards Quebec and the dual events unfolding there: The People's Summit and the Summit of the Americas. Cloistered behind closed doors, participants in the Summit of the Americas, the leaders of the "free" nations of the Western hemisphere, discussed dissolving trade barriers in the Americas, without the input of environmentalists, indigenous people, and other concerned citizens. Meanwhile, at The People's Summit, the excluded environmentalists, indigenous people, and concerned citizens discussed the impact of globalization. And out on the streets of Quebec city, a third event unfolded: The "Protesters' Summit", a cacophony of peaceful marches, chanting,

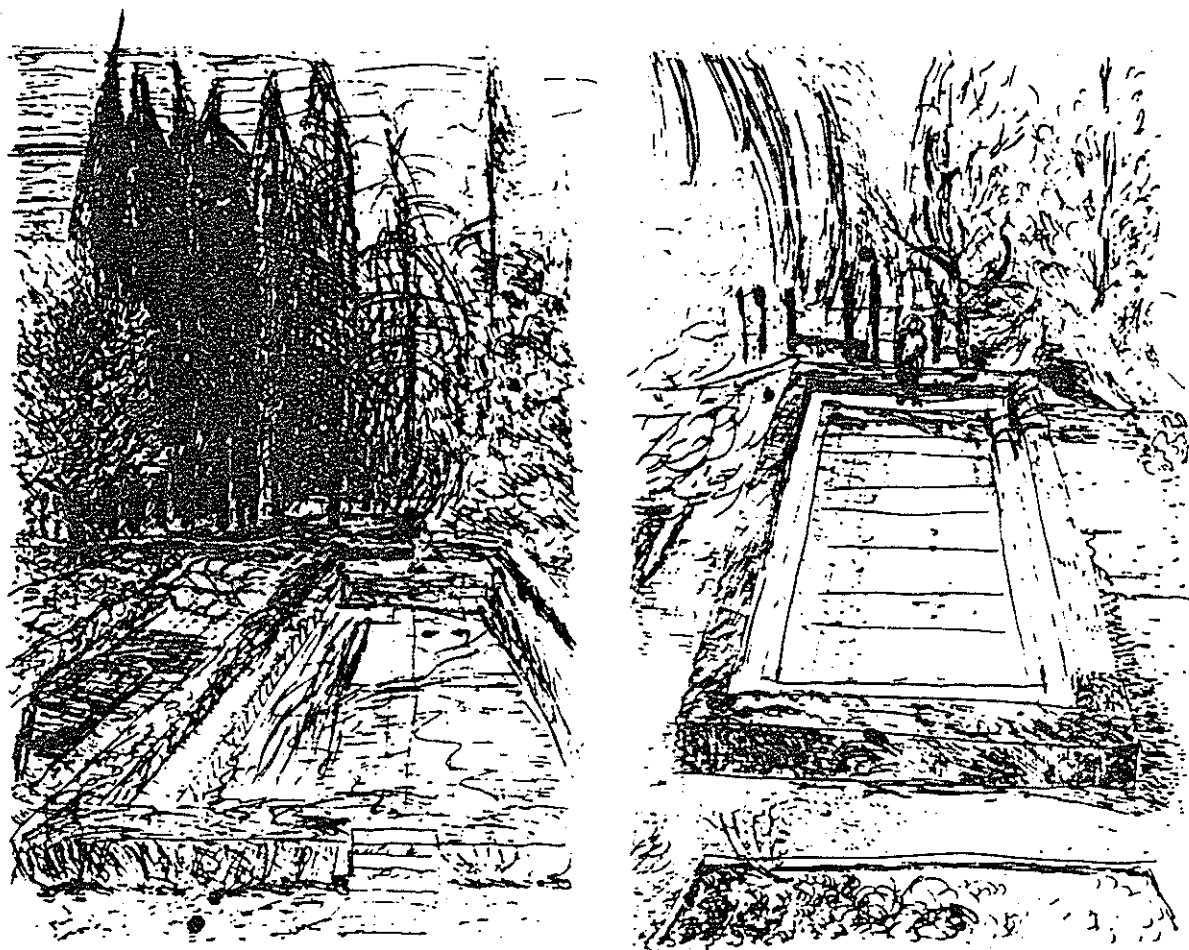


Figure 7

Jennifer Bartlett, In the Garden #33, 1980

Pen and ink, 19 1/2 x 26"

(Bartlett, 1982, n.p.)

singing and dancing; of vandalism, violence and arson. I am reminded of John Dewey's concerns regarding what he describes as an "eclipse of the public" (Dewey in Ezrahi, 1997, p.315), a lapse of the role of citizenry as a democratically regulating "observing agency." According to Dewey, this "spectator theory of knowledge" (p.316) supposes that governments will operate with a critical transparency. Ezrahi (1997) comments:

According to this view, democratization is largely a process through which the accountability, and therefore the legitimacy of the government depends on the increasing transparency of government policies and actions to an every increasing number of citizens. In the democratic polity, the government is obliged to reveal itself, to expose its considerations and actions, to the citizens, and the citizens are expected in turn to observe, witness, and judge the government. (p.316-317)

In the eyes of some citizens, the World Trade Organization's description of a Free Trade Area of the Americas is a manifesto orchestrated by (predominant American) capitalist oligarchies who place an economy of optimum profits over environmental concerns, workers' rights, and the needs of indigenous people; indeed, over democratic principles. Critics such as Martin Khor (2000) observe that, "At worst, the new trade agreements like WTO threaten poor nations' economic sovereignty, development prospects, environmental problems, and food security" (p.7). Accordingly, reporting on the Quebec Summit, Russo (2001) stated, "One after one, leaders of smaller or poorer countries lined up to indirectly question whether his [U.S. President George W. Bush's] vision of unbridled capitalism is the best way to nurture nascent democracies" (p.B1). In the new economy of free trade, democracies who attempt to protect national interests are swiftly sanctioned. For example recently under NAFTA, Canada was forced to pay 13 million dollars in penalties to an American corporation because the gasoline the corporation wished to market here contained a banned toxic additive (Becker, 2001, B5). But it is in developing nations such as Mexico - where environmental laws are lax, where labour is cheap, and political incentives for free-ranging American manufacturers are lucrative -

where the greatest moral violations occur. French (2000) reports that the conditions around *maquiladoras*, or foreign-owned manufacturing plants which shadow the California border, are shocking.

A survey conducted by the U.S. National Toxics Campaign in the early 1990s found toxic discharges at three quarters of the *maquiladoras* sampled. Chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, and brain damage were being emptied into open ditches that ran through the shantytowns around the factories. High rates of severe birth defects and other health problems have been detected along the border. Particularly horrifying have been elevated rates of spina bifida, a spinal-nerve defect, and anencephaly, a fatal condition in which babies are born with incomplete or missing brains, in the heavily polluted area that straddles Brownsville in Texas and Matamoros in Mexico. Despite the environmental site agreement that accompanied NAFTA, conditions have improved little and may even have deteriorated in the years since, as more U.S. companies have flocked to the region.

(p.84)

Meanwhile in Quebec, a towering chainlink fence separated thirty-four democratically elected leaders from their electorate. On the streets, acts of violence muddied the democratic purposes of the protesters. Buildings were vandalized, fires set, and RCMP riot squads pelted citizens with rubber bullets and canisters of tear gas. What then became of good intentions, what then became of the visions of commerce, equality, the voices of those marginalized? Gablik (1991) states:

The loss of our visionary being has lead us into addictive functioning; and the addictive nature of consumer society separates us from an awareness of ourselves as visionary beings. To move toward recovery, we must admit addiction on a systemic level and move beyond our own participation in this disease process.

(p.46)

Indeed not only are the cultures, the social structures and the environments of the regions that the G7 nations exploit destroyed, but on the home front jobs are lost, agricultural practices technologized, environments marginalized, and biodiversity destroyed. And here as elsewhere the gap between rich and poor widens. According to Mittal (2000), "The sad truth [of the global economy] is that blind pursuance of the market has created an economy that puts corporate profits before people's lives, that places economic efficiency over opportunity and compassion for all" (p.171).

April 6, 2001

I see in the calendar that by this time last year the crocus was blooming. But despite the late snowfalls, spring advances - the geese are returning and the river is flowing. Today the first junks arrive and forgotten melodies fill the barren bushes at the river park. I broke down a mound of snow in the garden. Beneath, a few timid shoots had begun to emerge.

In order for us to move towards recovery of vision we must reclaim that which has become invisible. This requires a deliberate shift from a closed state of vision to a fresh vista of reclaimed knowledge and new possibilities. Like waves upon a beach, the repossession of vision has both an outward and an inward dynamic. Meaning-making is enhanced through emancipatory vision, which in turn is heightened by inward reflection. As Varela, Thompson & Rosch (1991) observe, this process is hermeneutic in nature.

Minds awaken in a world. We did not design our world. We simply found ourselves within it; we awoke both to ourselves and to the world we inhabit. We come to reflect on the world as we grow and live. We reflect on a world that is not made, but found and yet it is also our structure that enables us to reflect upon this world. Thus in reflection we find ourselves in a circle: we are in a world that seems to be there before reflection begins, but that world is not separate from us. (p.3)

There are many events happening in our daily lives to which we shut our eyes. We are busy, over-committed and late; we drive to work and when we arrive, we have no recollection of the journey. We live with a constant deficit of caring; we neglect loved ones,

our community, our planet, and ourselves. We lack the time or concern to decipher the confusing barrage of media that surrounds us. We reduce our circles of knowledge, of travel and commerce, because of fear, confusion and exhaustion. Our inner cities wither, poverty grows exponentially, and so we withdraw to the suburbs, where we shop in mega-malls filled with acres of nothingness, hoping that cheap consumer goods will fill the void in our hearts.

Thus for some, the life-journey becomes a series of closures - a progressive disease with the world. I remember that as my maternal grandmother aged, she became more and more fearful of the outside world. She became afraid to go downtown. So her world shrank to the size of city block, the distance between her third floor apartment and the nearby grocery complex. Soon afterwards, she began to fear the children who played in the greenspace below her window. "They might knock me down," she exclaimed. Life-world shrank to the confines of her building, then to the size of her apartment, and now to two small rooms.

Life-changing events, such as illness, death, and birth, can become life-enhancing events by kindling a re-examination of priorities. As priorities change, vistas broaden, and mundane concerns are abandoned. Yet each day, events of this magnitude occur in the lives of people in our families, our classrooms, our communities, and in the natural world that surrounds and sustains us. In the forest, a species is extinguished; down the street, an elder dies alone; a youth brings a gun to school and fires it. Recently, I read about an inner city murder in my local paper. Two sisters had called the police emergency number five times. An operator summoned a police car after the first call at 8:51 p.m. and then again after the fifth call at 4:56 a.m. (Winnipeg Free Press, 2001, A9) In between those hours, the women were stabbed to death by the estranged boyfriend of one of the women. It is believed that the last sister to die, Doreen Leclair, died while making the final telephone call. The transcript of the calls, published in the paper, record the operator reprimanding Leclair as she relates that her sister Corrine McKeowen has been stabbed.

Calling 911 Inner city Saturday night

Calling 911 Domestic Violence Substance Abuse Mental Illness

Calling 911 A Knife A Rage

Calling 911 Aboriginal Women

Invisible Sisters

Call 911

Curriculum can be crafted to facilitate an opening of vision. Learners can begin to see familiar environments in new and startling ways. Last summer, I took a course in contemporary curriculum with Texas A & M Professor Patrick Slattery. The course was held over two weeks in July in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Slattery's course was characterized by a carefully considered curriculum, intentionally designed to derail learners' deeply seated notions about community, poverty, and of course, about curriculum. Students were invited to breach the familiar culture of classroom, and engage in a series of contextualized learning events such as volunteering at the Winnipeg Harvest food bank, visiting a Tibetan retreat and participating in a native sweatlodge ceremony at an aboriginal treatment centre. In addition to field trips, we viewed difficult and challenging films such as "Vukavor" (about the war in the Balkans), "In the Life" (about homosexual youth), and "A Lesson Before Dying" (about a black American on death row). We visited galleries, read curriculum theory, and discussed novels. We struggled as a class to deconstruct our experiences and reconstruct ourselves in light of the new knowledge we encountered each day. The explosive intensity of the compressed curriculum, the field events and the group dynamics had an effect not unlike the effects of life-changing events. Towards the end of the course I wrote in my journal:

The tension between the constructions of comfort and the chaos and excitement of happenstance raises many personal questions about the place of rigor, and the rhythms and patterns that make up my life; patterns which bring peace and harmony to my existence.

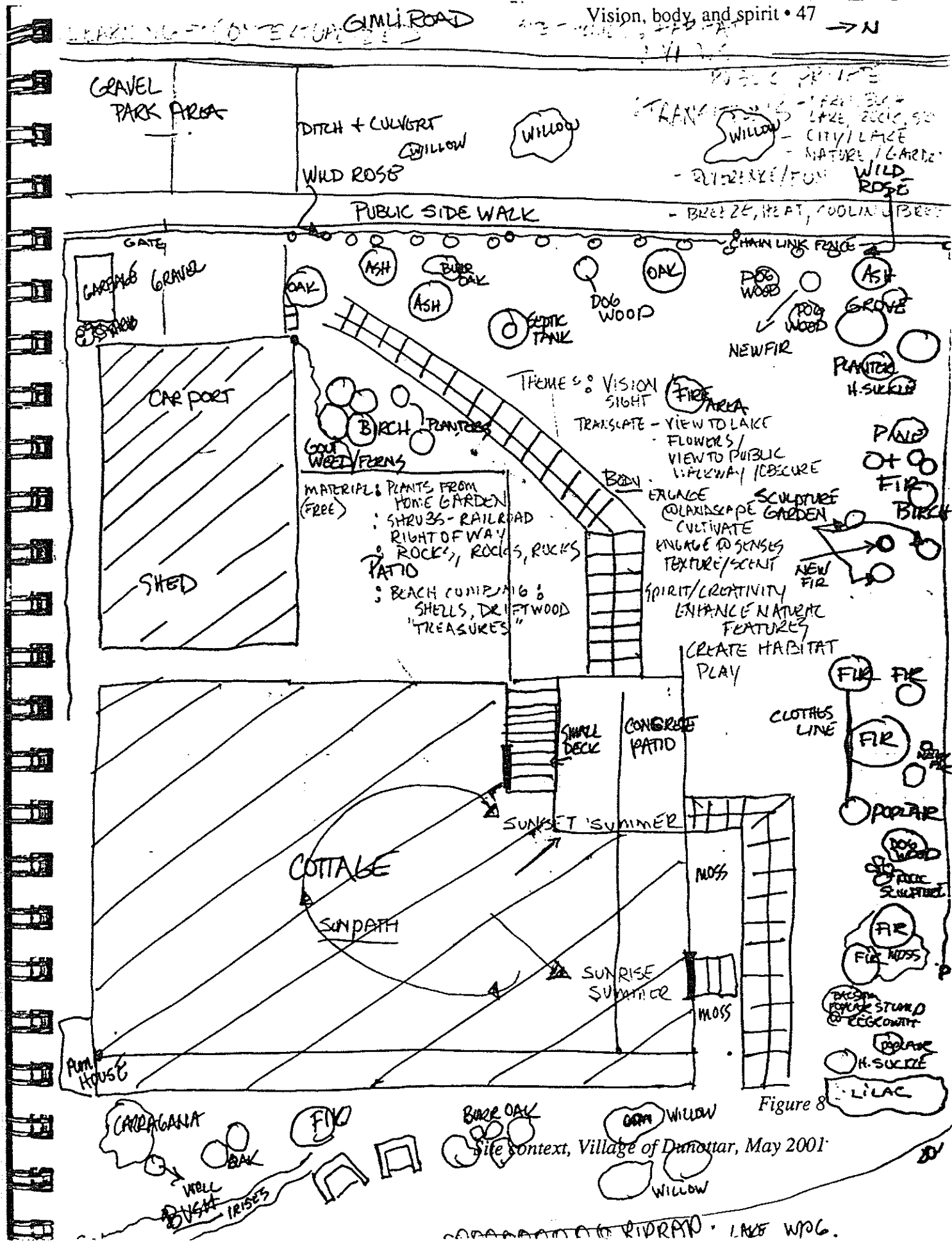
The erosion of personal boundaries that occurred during this experience left course participants scrambling to relocate themselves within the new horizons formed by the opening of vision. Suddenly the world was peopled by "others" who suffered, who were marginalized, ignored, or destroyed. Some of these people lived in other nations, some in our communities, some were even in the classroom with us. We came to know their stories and we wove them through our stories as we struggled to make sense of these newly connected life-worlds. According to Abrams (1996), "In the act of perception ... I enter into a sympathetic relationship with the perceived..." (p.54).

When vision becomes opened, we become aware of what was once hidden or invisible to us. This shift in perception does not come without cost. Seeing can awaken a painful ache inside as we become aware of the unseen, and this awareness can turn into overwhelming feelings of melancholy and helplessness, leaving one feeling paralyzed and powerless. Sanders (2001) speaks to that sensation:

Limited to a small tribe or a community of a few hundred people, conscience may prompt us to serve others in a balanced and wholesome way. But when television and newspapers and the Internet bring us word of dangers by the thousands and miseries by the millions and needful creatures by the billions; when pleas for help reach us around the clock; when aching faces greet us on every street - then conscience either goes numb or punishes us with a sense of failure. (p.68-69)

Awakened vision requires response. We must learn to reach deep inside ourselves; and more, we need to learn to embrace our communities and our natural world. Curriculum as vision positions learners to take action against pain and injustice; against isolation and poverty and pollution. Curriculum as vision means learning to be empowered and activated by vision.

Figure 8
Site context, Village of Dunottar, May 2001



GRAVEL PARK AREA

DITCH + CULVERT
WILLOW
WILD ROSE

PUBLIC SIDE WALK

GATE

GARDENS GRAVEL

CAR PORT

SHED

MATERIALS & PLANTS FROM HOME GARDEN (FREE)

- SHRUBS - RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY
- ROCKS, ROCKS, ROCKS
- PATIO
- BEACH CONCRETE & SHELLS, DRIFTWOOD "TREASURES"

COTTAGE
SUNPATH

SUNSET SUMMER

SUNRISE SUMMER

CONCRETE PATIO

SMALL DECK

MOSS

MOSS

CLOTHES LINE

CARDAGANA

FIND

BIRCH OAK

WILLOW

Figure 8

Site context, Village of Danottar, May 2001

2.2.1 When I Say Vision, Do I Mean Imagination?

May 12, 2001

I imagine a garden in a place with hard ground, and mutilated trees. I imagine a garden in a place between forest and farm, between lake and sky, between nature and cultivation. My friends gather in this garden to laugh and swap tales; I sit alone in the garden watching the blue of sky and water merge. A passerby inquires about the wild roses. The hot spicy fragrance rises to our nostrils as we chat over the fence.

The danger is that in starting with a picture of what should be, a gardener may lose sight of what is. A great garden says, "*This is where you are.*" It is as though the gardener's work was not so much to impose as to make visible, by artistry, something already there in the rocks, trees, and breezes of that locality, the spirit under the ground and in the air. (Williams, 1998, p.12)

My garden dwells in the margins of imagination and possibility. According to Greene (1995), "Imagination moves us out of confinement, through the windows of the actual, so that we can summon up alternative realities" (p.18). Gardens take time to become. The gardener must observe the path of the sun and shade, watch for new emergences in dark forgotten corners, and mark the existing flora and fauna. Additions and subtractions are carried out with reverence and care. Williams (1998) suggests that gardeners are geomancers, diviners of geographies, who form gardens out of place, love, and imagination. I spoke with a friend about my garden to be, and she suggested that I seek out the patterns that underlie the existing landscape. These thoughts were a gift, for I then saw the connection between the garden, this inquiry, and my role as inquirer, as researcher and as gardener. Envisioning patterns means discerning the order that underlies what might seem to be random and chaotic, and is, of course, a task of the artistic-aesthetic inquirer.

Figure 9
Site plan, 263 Gimli Road, May 2001

Area Context:

11th LARGEST FRESH WATER LAKE IN THE WORLD.
REMNANT OF GLACIAL LAKE AGGAEZI

SOCIAL HISTORY
COTTAGE AREAS
ESTABLISHED
BY RAILROAD
CN ON EAST
& CP ON WEST.



REVERED USED TO BOARD THE "MOONLIGHT EXPRESS" (SEE BOOKS ON LAKE) TO ENJOY

FACILITIES AT GRAND BEACH + WINNIPEG BEACH. BOTH CENTERS CONTINUOUS TO HAVE A SORT OF "BARNEY" ATMOSPHERE RIGHT UP TO THE 70'S.

THE AREA HAS ALWAYS BEEN FINANCIALLY DIVERSE @ AN ABUNDANCE OF PROPERTIES IN A WIDE PRICE RANGE. AREA HAS SEEN A RECENT INFUX OF RETIRED RESIDENTS, ATTRACTED BY PROXIMITY TO WPG./GIMLI, ACCESSIBILITY (ROADS, CLEARED) & MUNICIPAL SERVICES - GAS, GARBAGE PICKUP, ABUNDANT WELLS.

MAJORITY OF PROPERTIES STILL "COTTAGE STYLE" - IDIOSYNCRATIC INTERPRETATIONS OF COTTAGE - CHEAP PAINT & HOME CARPETRY - SORT OF FUN & IRREVERANT IN A CAMPY KIND OF WAY. RETIRED RESIDENT PROPERTIES - ~~THE~~ ~~USUALLY~~ ~~WELL~~ ~~MANTAINED~~ - ~~THESE~~ TEND TO BE IN TRANSITION FROM WOOD SIDING TO LOW MAINTENANCE (VIC!) VINYL SIDING!

AREA KNOWN AS BEACH COMMUNITIES - RATHER THAN COTTAGE DEVELOPMENT.

RAISED TYPICAL COTTAGES - INFLUENCED BY ICELANDIC BUILDING STYLE:



"HANGS" OF CENTRAL STRUCTURES.

LAND USE - SOME PROPERTIES ARE LARGE @ STANDS OF NATURAL BUSH - NATIVE CHERRIES, HAWTHORN, CHESTNUT, DOGWOOD, WILD ROSE SOME BIRCH & POPLAR. ALSO LOTS OF BUR OAK & POISON IVY!

Site plan, 263 Gimli Road, Manpower
SOME PROPERTIES SPREAD
EXPANSIVE OF GRASS & FIR
EXPANSIVE

TREES ALL INTRODUCED. OBSERVATIONS OF
MANY OF THESE AREAS DON'T INCLUDE

Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman Davis (1997) observe:

Oftentimes the emergent themes - arising out of scattered pieces - mark the interpretive reflections of the portraitist. Hearing the stories and witnessing the action then reflecting on their meaning and relationship to one another, the researcher begins to see the patterns." (p.210)

Emerging patterns unite with imagination to create spectral narratives of past intent.

May 12, 2001

I conjure a man and a woman, about my age, perhaps a bit younger. They are excited about their new acquisition: a cottage on the shores of Lake Winnipeg! Together they dig out five small holes, and then lovingly tuck in five tiny spruce trees. They imagine the trees tall, thick and strong. Sweeping boughs will create a fragrant barrier between the large screened veranda and the nearby neighbor's cottage, and shelter the cottage from harsh northern winds. Time passes, and the woman and man age. The trees thrive. One summer, the heat is unbearable. The scant breeze from the lake strangles in the tangle of trees and bush which choke the tiny lot. The old man moves stiffly through the dank thick air. He feels an urge to intubate the landscape. He goes to the shed and finds an ancient saw in a pile of rusting tools. It is a struggle to lift his arms to the thick boughs of the bushy fir trees. He drags the dull saw blade back and forth across the limbs. Sweat pours down his face. His shoulders ache. The bough snaps along the cut line. A tiny breeze begins to lick a tattered spider web.

Williams (1998) observes, "... the impulse is to create gardens that are removed from ordinary experience. Like works of art, such gardens have the power to jolt visitors into another reality, of nature still, but also of association and dream" (p.24). Our vision and our imagination also has the power to stir fixed webs of meaning which anchor our known world. According to Johnson (1987), "... all meaningful experience and all understanding involves the activity of imagination..." (p.157). Imagination disturbs the universe, daring us to see new configurations. Sewell (1999) states:

A finely tuned imagination is informed by the physical world, drawing from the past and present, and from the edges of our awareness. At the edges of our visual field and at the edges of our consciousness, the world is almost but not quite known. The edge is where our known experience becomes flavored with the unknown, where imagination steps forward into the realm of possibility. (p.20)

Visionary imagination can help us re-define curriculum. For some, curriculum is a word used to describe documents - curriculum guides, plans, outlines, lecture notes, tests, essays, and assignments. I envision curriculum as an event or a "happening", a "realm of possibility" which occurs when making comes together with intent and with enactment; where learner, teacher and milieu collide. Through this collision, new visions for learning are collectively formed. Gablick (1991) observes:

In the visionary mode, myths from all times and cultures are available to us; we touch into a seemingly magical dimension from which emanates a sense of the mysterious and the sacred; we have experiential access to the past or the future, and the limitations of our cultural conditioning are transcended. Visionary seeing is a force against the literal mind, which believes that things are only as they appear. (p.52)

Doll (1993) states, "In advocating a post-modern perspective for curriculum, I am suggesting we develop a 'dancing curriculum', one where the steps are patterned but unique, the results of interactions between two partners: teacher and text, teacher and student, student and text" (p.103). For Kincheloe (1998), visionary educators understand that, "...the frontier where the information of the disciplines intersects with the understandings and experience that individuals carry with them to school is the point where knowledge is created (constructed)" (p.135). If curriculum as vision means imagining possibilities, then curriculum inquiry as vision means constructing new frontiers through visionary approaches to inquiry, to theory, and to practice. According to Greene (1995):

To call for imaginative capacity is to work for the ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise. To ask for intensified realization is to see that each person's reality must be understood to be interpreted experience - and that the mode of interpretation depends on his or her situation and location in the world. It depends as well on the number of vantage points a person is able or enabled to take - the number of perspectives that will disclose multiple aspects of a contingent (not a self-existent) world. To tap into imagination is to become able to break with what is supposedly fixed and finished, objectively and independently real. It is to see beyond what the imaginer has called normal or "common-sensible" and to carve out new orders in experience. Doing so, a person may become freed to glimpse what might be, to form notions of what should be and what is not yet. (p.19)

As inquirer, I sweep through the ample landscape of research, attempting to make visible the patterns which emerge for me. I struggle to make meaning, weaving the words of others into the fabric of my lived world - into my educational questions, my experiences, and my visions. As Williams (1998, p.12) observes, if in the inquiry, as in the garden, I begin with a predisposition as to what shall be, the inquiry will be tainted and skewed towards self-favoured outcomes. Pallasmaa (2000) observes that "focused vision makes us mere outside observers..." (p.83).

Artists speak of the process of letting images emerge from canvas or stone. If the artist attempts to completely control the making, the image may never emerge, rather it becomes lost in intent. According to Bateson (1972), "If you allow purpose to organize that which comes under your conscious inspection, what you will get is a bag of tricks..." (p.433). The act of the inquiry, like the act of the artist, or of the gardener, is a dance of control and release, a geomancy of thought, ideas, theory and practice, propelling the past and present into the promise of the future. Dewey (1934) observes:

To the being fully alive, the future is not ominous but a promise; it surrounds the present as a halo. It consists of possibilities that are felt as a possession of what is now and here. In life that is truly life everything overlaps and merges. (p.18)

Vision as imagination reaches into the future with a promise of what could otherwise be. Hill (1985) suggests that vision "extends the body to lengths the limbs cannot reach", noting that vision "enlarges the world" (p.101). Sewell (1999) observes that vision as imagination restructures patterns of connectivity, altering habitual ways of knowing and seeing.

Grumet (1988) describes curriculum as "artifice", suggesting that curriculum is "deliberately designed to direct attention, provoke response and express value, it reorders experience so as to make it accessible to perception and reflection" (p.79) Therefore, curriculum is a construction of vision and intent - often "hidden" vision and intent. Sometimes that vision may be narrow and confining, as in conditions of cultural reproduction or repressive practices. The facilitator of curriculum may seek to reproduce what is comfortable or familiar to her/him, indoctrinate members of a specific religion or profession, or foster apprentices to her/his own methodologies and ideologies. Often these forms of curriculum are predetermined, outcomes are controlled. But can the meeting places of learner, teacher and milieu ever be truly controlled? Critical theorists suggest that curriculum *can not* be controlled and have demonstrated by deconstructing the constructions of curriculum, proving that such attempts at control often mask repressive practices. (Slattery, 1995; Haggerson, 2000; Lather, 1991) Can inquirer, or conciliator of curriculum convert a vision of curriculum to a visionary curriculum? According to Arent (1961):

And education, too, is where we decide whether we love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, nor to strike from their hands their chance of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by

us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world.

(quoted in Greene, 1995, p.12)

May 19, 2001

Yesterday I made a space for a garden. There is a place on my property where a large willow tree stands, its long arched boughs cascading towards the earth. The identification guide (Johnson, Kershaw, MacKinnon, Pojar, 1995, p.46) told me that this is Salix Lasiandra, the Western Shining Willow. The name reminds of my pet name for Lake Winnipeg, the shining path, because of the way it reflects the sun, the moon and the blue prairie sky. As with many of our native shrubs, Salix Lasiandra has medicinal properties, and was utilized by the Chipewyan as a dressing for ulcerated wounds. A compound in the willow bark, Salicin, has been used since ancient times to relieve pain. At the place where the boughs should be suspended over Lake Winnipeg, they wove into the upward spires of an overgrown lilac clump. A fine place for a garden, but some radical surgery was required.

Removing the lilac bush was relatively easy. Lilac roots are complex and itinerant, but they are brittle and simple to remove from the earth. However, the Siberian elms which had invaded the site were less willing to release their grip. It took a considerable amount of digging, chopping and time before the largest of the elms collapsed. Now a patch of empty earth awaits a new purpose, and the shining willow caresses the place where the shining path meets the sky.

Sometimes curriculum also requires radical surgery. Yet as in the community of the garden, some constructions of curriculum are not willing to yield. The theoretical shift to postmodern ideologies has revealed that some of the traditional canons of knowledge demonstrate a hermetic vision of curriculum, excluding the unique voices of women, persons of color, and others from the learning milieu. According to Slattery (1995):

Race, gender, and cultural studies in the postmodern curriculum are about shattering myths, especially those that perpetuate repression of the dignity and

identity of the self and those that perpetuate racism, sexism, violence, homophobia, genocide, religious bigotry, political repression, and cultural elitism. (p.125)

I recall my own schooling, where as a visual thinker, I felt silenced by the prevalence of linear, positivist, and rationalist forms of learning. Not only did this situation make it difficult for me to succeed academically, but the alienation of this “foreign” schooling left my psyche gravely damaged. However, radical surgery does not necessarily mean “wiping the slate clean”, for if the pendulum was to swing the other way, those who favour, or even require more rationalist forms of knowledge, would then be excluded. Rather, as Slattery (1995) states, “Postmodernism challenges educators to explore a worldview that envisions schooling through a different lens of indeterminacy, aesthetics, autobiography, intuition, eclecticism, and mystery” (p.23). As in the garden, curricular alteration requires sensitivity to existing strengths and a penetrating vision, weeding out invasive ideologies which have overgrown their original intent. The transaction of alteration is a visionary edit, for one must act with trust, hope, and wisdom. According to Doll (1993):

Post-modernism posits a quite different social, personal, and intellectual vision. Its intellectual vision is predicated not on positivist certainty but on pragmatic doubt, the doubt that comes from any decision based not on metanarrative themes, but on human experience and local history. Acceptance of the (troubling) situation may well cause us pangs of fear but it also provides us with a motive to be better negotiators - with ourselves, our concepts, our environment, others. The loss of certainty encourages, if it does not cause us to dialogue and communicate with others. In turn, this dialogic communication can lead to a different social vision, one applicable to teaching as well as foreign policy decisions. Such a vision recognizes the rights of others and eschews the concept of “one best” or “one right” way. It accepts the indeterminacy inherent in complexity and multiple

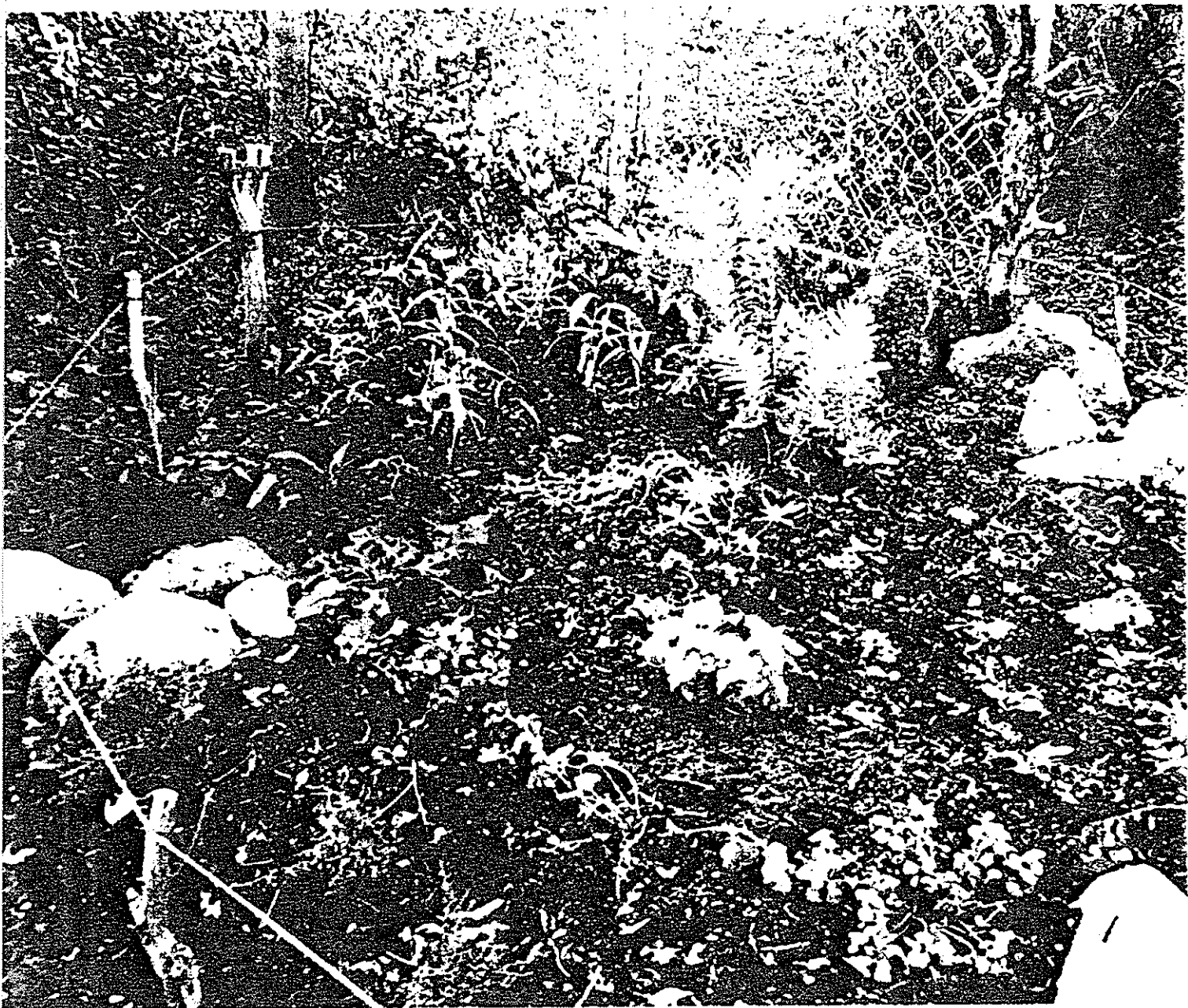


Figure 10

"Thesis" garden, Whytewold, Manitoba, June 2001

perspectives.... At the same time postmodernism strives for an eclectic yet local integration of subject/object, mind/body, curriculum/person, teacher/student, us/others. This integration, though, is a living process; it is negotiated not preordained, created not found. And this integration depends in part on us and our own actions. We have a responsibility for our futures as well as the futures of others. In this sense, carrying out an open vision may well bring us to an ecological perspective and cosmology. And within this perspective, we may find a personal vision, one which helps us recognize that our sense of self and reality as independent objects is meaningless. We are able to discern ourselves only in terms of others, reality only in terms of imagination. (p.62)

May 20, 2001

I begin a garden with materials I have available to me - rocks, fire moss, and driftwood; wild roses and red willow dug from the railroad right of way.

2.3 When I Say Vision, Do I Mean Reflection?

Recently, I attended an University Teaching Services workshop on creative teaching. As it often is with such events, the majority of attendees were already creative educators who had come to the workshop to expand their pedagogical repertoire. We discussed a variety of ways in which to enliven university classrooms, "icebreakers", puzzles, jokes, group work, and reflective journals. However, while many of the instructors used reflective journals in the classroom, only three utilized journals themselves: a nursing instructor, the UTS instructor and I.

May 21, 2001

As I develop the garden, I pay special attention to the identity of the landscape. I look for ways to develop transitions in the garden, from lake to shore and from earth to sky. At the eastern end of the property, lake meets a jumble of heavy boulders designed to protect the fragile lacustrine clays which form our shoreline. On Saturday, the neighbors

told us about the way the lakefront used to look before the Longden's had it reconstructed. There was once a huge concrete bunker, designed to keep the lake at bay. It now lies buried beneath layers of clay, soil and grass. They had also constructed a wooden deck which cantilevered over the bunker. The deck and several large trees were claimed a long time ago by fierce storms. In 1997 an autumn storm breached the Longden's reconstructed lakefront. Monstrous waves rose above the granite boulders, gouging out huge chunks of land. When we purchased the property, the scars from the storm were still in evidence.

Reflection as a mode of inquiry requires inward vision. Maxine Greene (1995) observes, "To be yourself is to be in the process of creating a self, an identity" (p.20). Curriculum is therefore not merely characterized by the acquisition of knowledge; it is an evolving process of self-knowledge, knowledge which allows the learner to interpret the world, and also be interpreted by the world through a progression of spiraling levels of self-understanding. Recall Varela, Thompson & Rosch (1991): "Thus in reflection we find ourselves in a circle..." (p.3). Fuery (1997) observes that the gaze - the development of perspective - is a symbiotic process of inward and outward reflection, stating "The gaze is not simply the mechanism of perception, but rather a fundamental structure in the ways in which the subject relates to the cultural order, and ... the way in which subjectivity itself is formed through the mechanisms of the gaze" (p.70). Through these tidal processes, the development of reflective consciousness avoids the trap of narcissism. The knowing self is in a continual state of ebb and flow; reaching out to the world and in turn, being altered by what is found there. Abrams (1996) states:

However determinate one's genetic inheritance, it must still, as it were, be woven into the present, an activity that necessarily involves both a receptivity to the specific shapes and textures of that present and a spontaneous creativity in adjusting oneself (and one's inheritance) to these contours. It is this open activity, this dynamic blend of receptivity by which every animate organism necessarily orients

itself to the world (and orients the world around itself), that we speak of by the term "perception". (p.50)

This idea of weaving one's life story into the world is a phenomenological premise, one which was educationally defined by William Pinar through his work on the concept of *currere*. (Pinar, 1975; Schubert, 1986; Graham, 1991; Slattery, 1995) Pinar returned to the etymological roots of the word "curriculum": *currere* or "to run the race" and redefined the course of education as journey rather than as destination. According to Graham (1991):

In this manner the curriculum can be seen to evolve, since with its focus on the learner ..., it acknowledges the student's search for meaning as an interactive and reflective process undertaken in a social milieu. It is further argued that autobiography as writing the self, as a method of reflecting on and grounding the self in lived experience, comes closest to hand as the prime candidate to accomplish such a task of reconceptualization. (p.120)

Currere resurfaces in educational homilies such as "life-long learning", where learning is seen as an on-going process that extends beyond the experience of schooling. Unfortunately, many curricular interpretations of "life-long learning" are skill and task oriented, rather than the acquisition of knowledge-seeking abilities such critical thinking, reflection and imagination. According to Kincheloe (1998):

As a perpetual struggle, the curriculum in Pinar's *currere* is never a finished product that can be finally mastered and passed along to an awaiting new generation. Such a perspective protects the curriculum from the all-too-common fragmentation of modernist pedagogies, as it focuses our attention on the lived realities, socio-political encounters, and the identity formation of individual human beings. (p.131)

Currere takes on a critical or postmodern perspective when educator or inquirer engages in a journey of self-reflection. Kincheloe (1998, p.133) observes that *currere* requires us to become "action researchers of ourselves", questioning and reflecting upon our own stance as knowledge-makers. As in the garden, at the point where we step back

from experience and reflect upon its making, we begin to see our constructions in a new light. Williams (1998) states, "Weaving endings with beginnings, gardeners glimpse what they cannot see" (p.57). I recall that I once backed out of an art exhibition, for when I finished the large drawing I was going to exhibit, I saw personal issues revealed, issues which I had not yet sufficiently explored nor understood enough to share with others. Likewise, for educators, reflective practices may reveal previous hidden conventions or suggest new avenues for pedagogical exploration. It may also reveal repressive curriculum. For example, one of the educators at the creative teaching workshop wondered if it was an acceptable practice to group students according to academic ability. While I wriggled uncomfortably in my chair, the instructor gently inquired if the instructor found this teaching method effective. "No," he replied, "in the group of high achievers, each wanted to lead, while in the group of low achievers, no one was able to initiate a path to success." According to Warnke (1993):

In other words, by coming to understand different actions and practices, I also acquire the capacity to understand my own in a different way. I understand the generality or particularity of my actions, practices, and norms; I learn to ask new questions about them and to conceive of different solutions to the conflicts they may produce. To this extent, by trying to understand other cultures and texts, we can also come to understand our own assumptions, prejudices, and concerns differently and indeed, come to understand the way in which the meaning and context of different actions and practices set our own actions and practices in question.

(p.292)

After I accepted the Faculty of Architecture's challenge to teach a materials course to interior design students in the autumn of 2000, I began a new research journal. This is not usually my practice - I try to use the same research journal for multiple research areas, educational research with gardening, for example. I began by exploring some of the taxonomic texts regarding materials, despite assurances from both the department head and

the studio chair that a rationalist approach to materials knowledge was not required.

However, I wanted to assure myself that I had the appropriate body of knowledge to bring to this teaching experience, even though I had managed a materials library for almost ten years. As I laboured through these texts, I began to see that although the information was presented as objective, it was in fact incredibly subjective. The learning agenda presented was one which I like to call “office equals carpet”, a position that specific environments should be resolved materially by prescriptive methods.

As I began to flesh out new ways of teaching materials I tried to develop curriculum along lines that I hoped would help students develop innovative means of interpreting interior environments. I introduced them to the idea of materials as a language. Because such a language is constructed culturally, materials carry “sedimented perceptors” which convey aesthetic, environmental, geographical, and political ideologies. Further, I hoped to demonstrate that once one understood that the fabrications of society are culturally constructed, one could mine cross-disciplinary boundaries for inspiration and ideas. I developed a learning module I called “Aesthetic Reasoning”. Students were invited to chose an interior - it could be contemporary, historical, or personal - and compare it to an aesthetic construction such as art, music, or poetry. My friend and fellow graduate student Chris Higgins was helpful in critiquing my inaugural curriculum constructions. She wondered what sort of art I would suggest the students explore. When I described some of the artists I planned on recommending, she pointed out that these were the artists of the western canon, artists I had been introduced to through my art history classes in the late 1970's. What of artists of other cultures, both geographical and generational? My curricular construction was revealed as repressive, for it did not allow students to bring their own contextualized interpretations of aesthetic construction to the learning milieu. According to Kincheloe (1998):

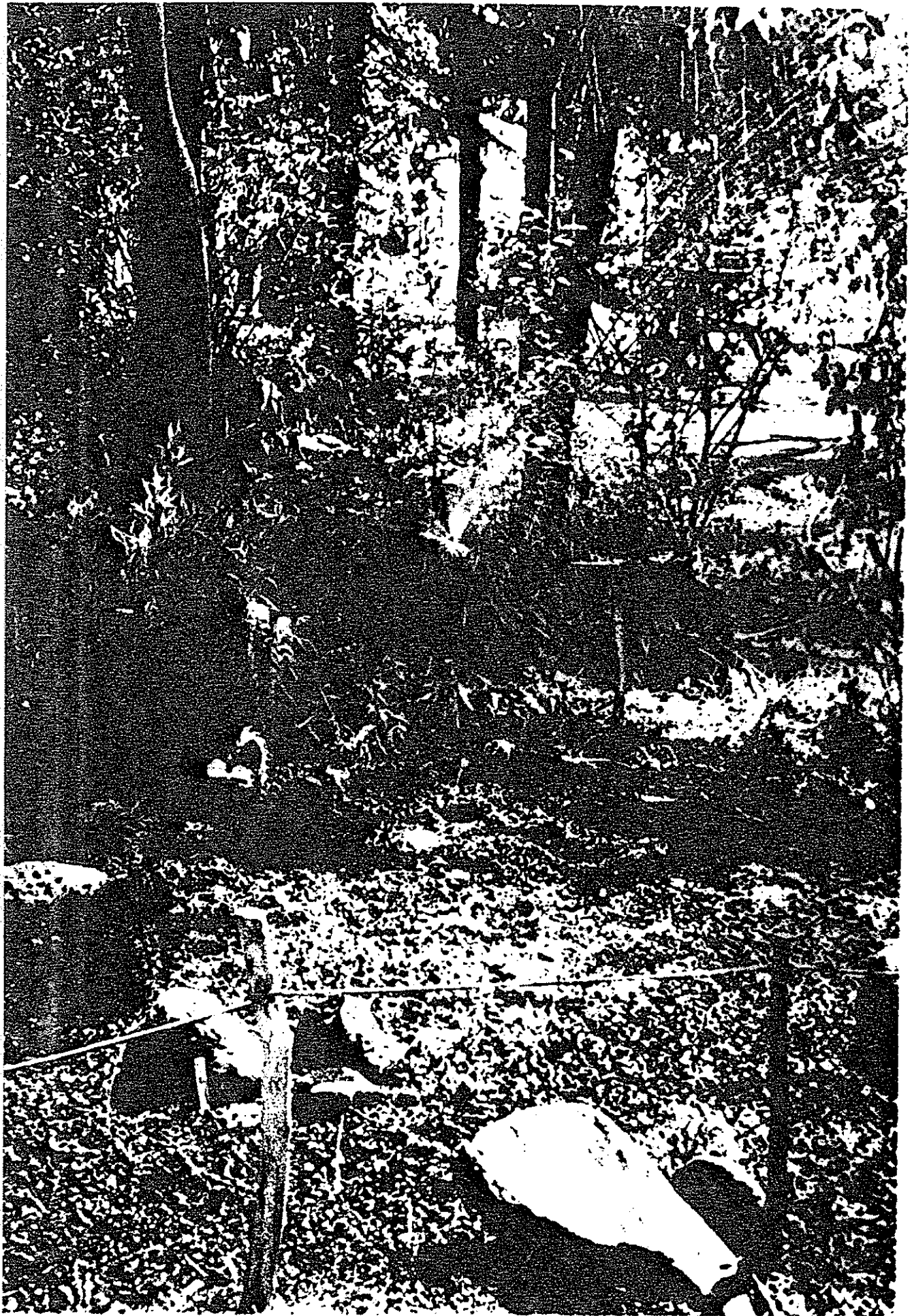
When we learn why we see what we see, we are thinking about thinking, analyzing the forces that shape our consciousness, placing what we perceive in a meaningful

context. We come to learn that all seeing is selective, filtered by the ways that power has constructed our subjectivity. We learn that we see from particular vantage points in the web of reality, coming to realize that there is no value-neutral way of perceiving. (p.134)

May 26, 2001

I plant a dogwood by the new garden site. Beneath the garden are the remains of a concrete staircase which once led into the lake. My garden feels historically anchored, layered over the constructions of others who have shaped this landscape. I reflect on the widowed Lillian, her shoreline breached, her sense of security diminished. I have a new respect for my predecessors; I sense the fear and desperation which motivated them to reshape the lake shore. I ponder the frustration and exhaustion which finally cleaved their lives from these shining shores. My garden will also disappear into the landscape of this place, becoming stratified with visions of those who came before me and those who will come after me. Someday, I too will tire and leave this place where the shining path meets the Shining Western Willow.

Figure 11
First watering, "Thesis" garden, Whytewold, Manitoba, June 2001



Chapter 3 • Curriculum Inquiry As Body

VILMA ANDERSONS

Peacefully on Friday May 25, 2001, at the Lac du Bonnet Personal Care Home in Lac Du Bonnet MB. Vilma Andersons, aged 89 years, passed away with her husband Hugo at her side.

Vilma loved to travel and during their marriage they went skiing to Jasper, to Hawaii, Tahiti as well as many places throughout the world. *Her garden was a place she felt at home in, her flowerbeds will never be the same again now that she is gone.*

KARL JOHN DOERN

Peacefully in his 96th year on May 17, 2001 Karl John Doern passed away in Toronto, ON.

Karl was born on January 11, 1906 in Overstone, MB and lived most of his life in Winnipeg. He was an avid basketball player while attending school in Plymouth, WI. He was employed many years at Continental. *Karl loved his home on Roberta and his garden, especially after retirement in 1971.*

May 27, 2001

What happens when hands touch the earth, when soil is turned by shovel and spade and transformed into gardens? The making of gardens is bound into experience through the labour of the body. I reflect on the obituaries of Karl John Doern and Vilma Andersons. The death of a gardener. The silencing of a body which once held communion with the earth, a body which brought forth abundant growth, a body which returns once more to mingle with earth and air and water. I reflect on the power of gardens, such important fixtures in the lives of Karl and Vilma, that they garner mention in their obituaries. I also note the extended life that each enjoyed; Karl lived to ninety-six and Vilma to eighty-nine - generous lives. Could gardens have contributed to their extended existences? Thompsen (1997) observes that garden labour contributes to good health by reducing stress,

improving circulation and developing flexibility. Each are cited factors, which when combined with good fortune, contribute to long meaningful lives.

As May concludes, my family is concerned with the making of gardens. In Lac du Bonnet, my sister prepares her ample vegetable garden. She too creates gardens in a place on the fringe, between farmlands, forest and rivers. Her soil is the rich sandy loam so desired by gardeners, and is perfect for cultivating vegetables. In Winnipeg, my parents till the large garden plot which is their backyard. They will argue over the placement of the rows (as they do each year), then my father will plant the garden. My mother's task is the most onerous - she weeds the garden throughout the growing season. She told me once that she finds it cathartic, a brief moment of self-control and mastery in her caregiving bound existence. Last year my father defied nature, planting the garden by the first of May, long before the danger of frost had passed. He wanted the seeds secure in the ground before he entered the hospital for lung surgery.

To the east, on the borders of the Sandiland Provincial Forest, my in-laws garden in raised beds which they surround with snow fencing to keep the wildlife from snacking on delicate plants. Last year John built a greenhouse. Lloyd and I visited it in late winter, scooping the snow from the doorway with our hands and feet in order to gain access to the interior. Inside it was warm and bright, several degrees warmer than the winter day. The earthen beds had been prepared for early sowing. As the streams of sunlight kissed the beds we breathed in the promise of spring in the warmed soil.

Today my body is tired and slow to respond. I too have been gardening, creating new patterns in this landscape. The muscles in my hands are stiff, making writing a difficult task. A long walk along the beach this morning helped to loosen my reluctant body, but a nap would help more. Clearly, a long day's labour in the garden makes the task of writing and reflecting upon the experience difficult. Even now, as I write these words, the garden beckons, and I must still the impulse to abandon this task for the physical pleasures of planting and cultivation.



Figure 12

Morden Blush Rose

Gardens are powerful embodied human experiences because they engage us holistically, uniting our minds, our bodies, and our spirit. Opposingly, curriculum has often been deliberately fractured, engaging our minds in the classroom, but expelling our bodies and spirit from the learning experience. "We are shaped as we participate in the shaping of the contexts in which we live, physically and phenomenologically," observe Sumara and Davis (1998). "The body, then, is not a mere locus of identity, nor a simple vehicle through which to exercise intention. It is simultaneously, a material structure and a communal one" (p.80-81). According to Sardello and Sanders (1999), "Our sense of movement is the body sense that gives us an inner feeling of purpose, of destiny" (p.230). Bodies are powerful learning media. We absorb the world through our senses, learning to discern the sounds, scents, sights, and textures of the human and natural environments. According to Bergson (cited in Grosz, 1999):

There is, between our body and other bodies, an arrangement like that of the pieces of glass that compose a kaleidoscopic picture. Our activity goes from an arrangement to a re-arrangement, each time no doubt giving the kaleidoscope a new shake, but not interesting itself in the shake, and seeing only the new picture....
The cinematographical character of our knowledge of things is due to the kaleidoscopic character of our adaptation to them. (p.96)

Through our bodies, we shape and are in turn, shaped by the world. Noting that the skin is the dominant sensing organ of human infants, Montagu (1971) observes that we become aware of ourselves through tactile experience. The experience of bodies is essential for mammalian development, for self knowledge and for understanding the world. Kittens and birds which are handled from birth are promoted as "hand-raised" and are considered the best adapted to a shared life with humans. Dogs are frequent visitors to nursing homes. Tactile contact between these canines and the elderly has been proven to lower blood pressure and rekindle memories of loved pets long departed. Our bodies are exquisitely evolved sensing organisms, or as Abrams (1996) states, "Our senses connect us to the

places we inhabit ..." (p.271). We drink of the world with our senses, pilot earthly landscapes through the movement of our limbs and share interpretations of our lived-world through embodied creations such as music, dance, sculpture, architecture, gardens and play. According to Franck (1998):

The bodies we *have* are easily treated by architects and others as bounded, passive, entities whose primary, if not singular sensory mode is vision. The bodies we *are* are moving, changing, permeable and fluid; through the various senses and movement our bodies extend into their surroundings and through the permeability of bodies, the surroundings enter them. The bodies we are require different spatial and physical conditions depending upon the task or activity at hand, depending upon characteristics of age, gender, size and culture, and depending upon the passage of time. (p.18)

"I sing the body electric," rhapsodized Walt Whitman (1900, 2001, p.1). Our bodies are charged with impulses, eager to interface with a world of textures and shapes. Yet classrooms, where we conduct the majority of teaching and learning, are for the most part barren and sterile environments. Recall the sounds of classrooms: chalk scraped across a raspy chalkboard, a cough breaking the silence, the smells of emptiness and dry dust, the sight of uniform desks, white walls, windows designed to conceal the view. jagodinski (1992) observes, "Texture is the conversation of 'things' to enable one to know them intimately" (p.165). Last autumn, when teaching design students about materials, I spoke extensively about the texture of the classroom we inhabited. Cold, desolate and often dirty, with peeling paint and windows placed high beyond the capacity of human vision, the classroom was ample fodder for discussions of environments and the potential somatic effects of such a lack of materiality. We deemed it to be a site of nowhere, for nothing indicated where in the world this classroom was situated. I brought attention to the placement of the seats, the posture of the students' bodies as they slouched in the rigid fiberglass seats. We touched the walls, the chalkboards, and the flooring. We discussed

how sounds travelled through the classroom from the noisy public space outside the door, and debated if the physical attributes and structure of the seating encouraged or discouraged students to be attentive to learning. It was my hope that an awakening of awareness to immediate place could inspire a lifelong attentiveness to the choices of materials and furnishings, and to the psychological effects of those choices in the future environments that these students will create. In contrast, I recently attended a workshop in a nearby university college. The classroom floors were sparkling clean, desks and chalkboards were washed and wiped, and the walls freshly painted and adorned with prints and original works from well-known local artists. The windows were sensitively placed, oriented to human bodies with sightlines clear to the river forest nearby. It felt pleasant to learn in a place so well cared for.

In traditional schooling, the body is often treated as nothing but an vessel for the mind. I grew up during the time that children sat in classrooms assembled with uniform rows, our feet placed forward, backs straight, our eyes facing the blackboard. Hands were to be always in sight of the teacher, clasped atop the desks, where the sadistic French instructor could slap our little fingers with his white rod, arresting any stray movements, improper gestures or actions within the classroom. Twice daily, children were turned out into the schoolyard. For fifteen minutes our bodies could move about, engaging in unfettered, unstructured activities. In fact, we were discouraged from huddling together in small conversational groups, and should we attempt to engage in this forbidden activity we were shoved back into the action by playground monitors. Once a week we were herded into the gymnasium for activities of longer duration. This was an other occasion for cruelty, for the French teacher was also the physical education teacher, and this was his opportunity to use the same white rod upon the legs of laggards as we ran about the gym. According to Shapiro (1999):

Play is the child's praxis upon the world. Through play, children restructure, invent, create, and transform the given reality. Through play the child's body

becomes the mediator for her or his creative and agentic powers. Within schooling, however, the body of the child is the object of a curriculum that denies creative and imaginative powers. For to play, imagine, create, fantasize, explore, discover, or show curiosity threatens the structured landscape that is physically and psychically geared to minimize change. Repression, conformity, and sometimes resistance become the necessary mode of being for the child. (p.85)

In middle school, our budding adolescent bodies were introduced to a variety of activities designed to siphon off raging hormones so that the mind would be free to learn a series of long since forgotten tasks. Stinson (1995) states:

Most educators appear to want to suppress student physicality not enhance it, not even in the early grades; teachers attempt to train students to sit still and delay bodily inclinations, even ones so basic as going to the bathroom. Most often, physicality is recognized as something that must be managed in order to obtain the best academic performance. (p.45)

By high school, the student "body" was divided. "Jocks" were the team sport participants, the physical ambassadors for the school; "brains" buried themselves in academic experiences, and those who felt estranged from these polemics - druggies and drinkers, wolves and "sucks" - became administratively invisible. Each category of student demonstrated particular modes of behavior, modes which were regulated by the group psyche and the culture of the school. Those who excelled within particular social categories were accorded appropriate attention - negative or positive - by peers and administrative personnel. By graduation, the separation of body and mind based knowledge systems was complete. Some students would depart for college or university, joining the throngs of undergraduate students crammed into cavernous lecture halls, bodies wriggling in rigid fibreglass seats and eyes fixed on the tiny lecturer at the bottom of the theatre or worse - a television screen.

Figure 13
Lake Winnipeg Activities
Peter McAdam Collection / Provincial Archives of Manitoba
(Russell, 2000, p.9)



Those who entered the workplace directly from school would find the unnatural body rhythms developed by schooling prepared them well for long hours of inactivity at a machine (or a computer which controls a machine) or alternatively, academic activity would be abandoned for high paying entry-level jobs in the labour field, jobs that lasted as long as bodies could tolerate the excess of continued physical labour. Suransky (1983, cited in Shapiro 1999) observes:

The social landscape of the classroom, with an emphasis on discipline, punctuality, acceptance of authority, and accountability for one's world, replicated the social relations of the workplace, facilitating an early acculturation to the social division of labor, thereby reproducing the class structures which mass education supposedly diminishes. (p.85)

June 8, 2001

All day, a parade of sun-wrinkled bronze men pass by on the road outside my cottage window, a promenade of dented pick-up trucks, each with a particular trade emblazoned upon rusting cabdoors with peeling paint. These men make their living with their bodies and their machines, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, installers of heating and cooling systems, lawn care workers, garbage and sewage removers. Today, Friday, there is a flurry of traffic, with trucks going to and fro all day, labourers hastening to complete their tasks, so that their clients, hard at work in the city, can rest their bodies when they arrive at their cottages for the weekend. At four o'clock the traffic ceases as the men "book off" a little early to enjoy time with families or a beer with friends. Meanwhile, out on the lake in bobbing skiffs, fishers tend the nets. I wonder how they navigate the maze of nets, rocks and treacherous sandbars. Familiars in the guise of pelicans, cormorants, and herring gulls accompany the fishing craft, drawn by offerings of filleted pickerel carcasses. Most fishers are members of families of fishers, the latest generation of Icelandic immigrants who reap a living, or a death, upon the bountiful and terrible Lake Winnipeg.

The body as an educative site is an idea that runs counter to the notion that the mind is the location of all knowledge. Contemporary discourse, especially in the area of postmodern and feminist theory (McWilliams, 1996; Shapiro, 1999; Martusewicz, 1992; Bordo, 1993) has been focused on reclaiming the body, theoretically, culturally, and physically. According to McWilliams (1996):

For more than a decade, however, a project of re/covering the importance of the body as a field of cultural activity has been under way This project does not reject the body as the bio-medical *korper* out of hand; but distinguishes this from the idea of the body as *leib* - a "lived body" by drawing attention to corporality or embodiment as a generative principle. (p.17)

Emancipatory inquirers generate knowledge to inspire "wide awakeness", a greater openness to the possibilities of conscious action within self and society. Grumet (1988) notes, "To bring what we know to where we live has not always been the project of curriculum, for schooling, as we have seen, has functioned to repudiate the body, the place where it lives, and the people who care for it" (p.129). Shapiro (1999) suggests that it is through critical pedagogy that explores body memories and how we as beings give meaning to those memories, that inquirers can constitute an understanding about how humans relate to and live in the world. She states, "Critical awareness must enter new territories in order to address the overriding emphasis in institutions of education on valuing the knowing mind, which continually denies the knowing of the heart and of the body" (p.28). Indeed, as a means of deepening experience and connectivity, the recovery of the body in curricular research and practice could potentially inspire learners to seek critical action within their everyday lives.

3.1 Captive Bodies: The Educative Body in Theory

We die containing a richness of lovers and tribes, tastes we have swallowed, bodies we have plunged into and swum up as if rivers of wisdom, characters we have climbed up as if caves. I wish for all of this to be marked on my body when I am dead.

I believe in such cartography - to be marked by nature, not just to label ourselves on a map like the names of rich men and women on buildings.

We are communal histories, communal books.

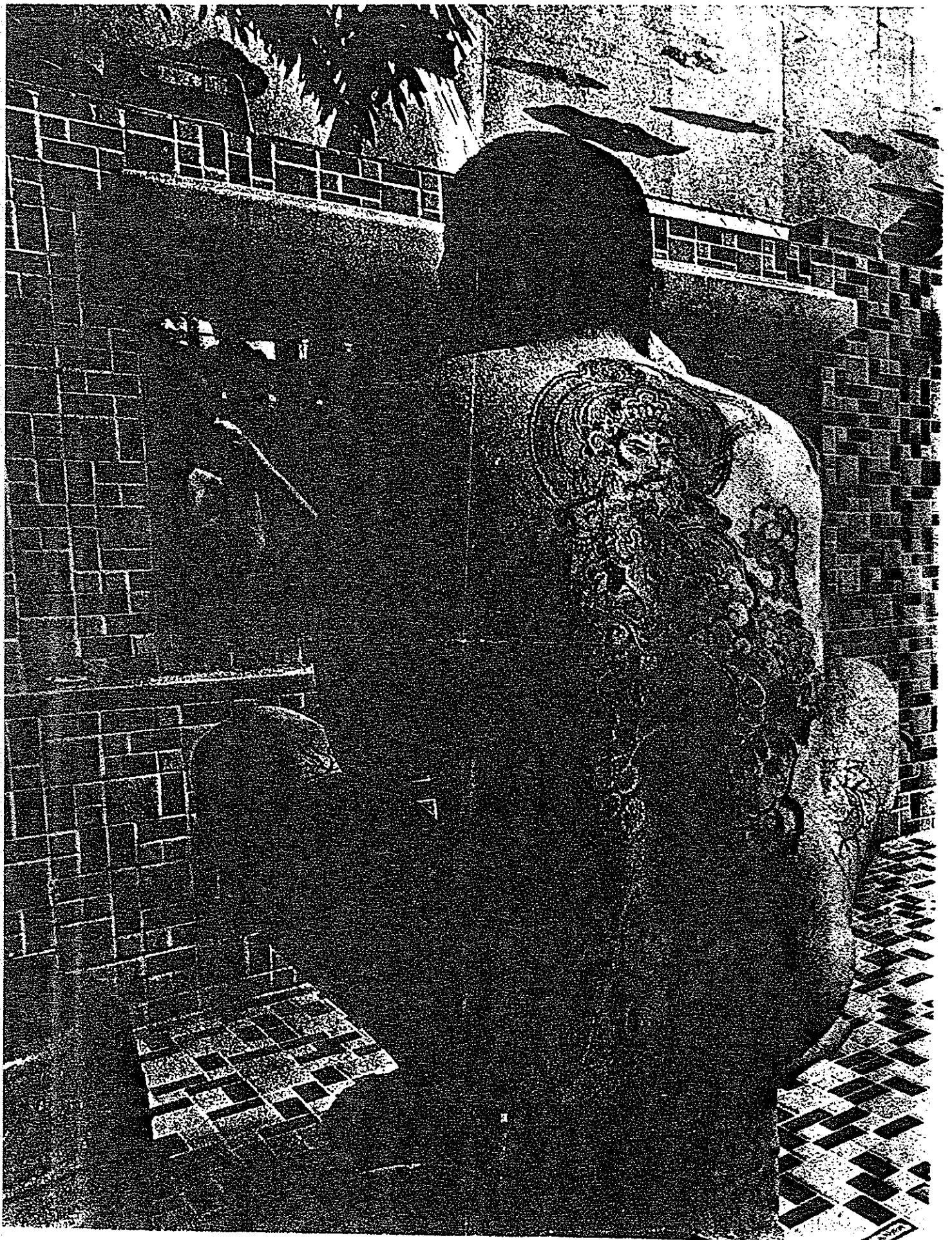
We are not owned or monogamous in our taste or experience.

Michael Ondaatje, 1993

Cultural critic Patrick Fuery (1997) identifies four major paradigms in the contemporary reclamation of the body in interdisciplinary theory: the growth of critical feminism and women's studies; psychoanalytic studies; and semiotics, which concerns itself with bodies as text, a "semiotics of flesh". The fourth is the contribution of French philosopher Michel Foucault. Sarup (1993) divides Foucault's theorizing into three phases. The first surrounds the notion of a "knowing subject" and the development of Western philosophical discourse; in phase two, Foucault explores the formation of the human subject and how he/she is affected by cultural power structures which seek to render the subject/body "docile, submissive, erotic, usable and productive" (p.86). Finally, the third phase, characterized by Foucault's The History of Sexuality, looks at the polemic tension within the subject through self-constructions of dominance and submission.

Susan Bordo (1993) traces the cleavage of mind from body through Western philosophical discourse back to the time of Plato, observing that "... the constant element throughout historical variation is the construction of body as something apart from the true self ..." (p.5). Spretnak (1997) also researches the genealogy of dis-embodiment, and raises the notion that the development of Platonic polemics was morally-based. According to Spretnak, Greek philosophy was grounded on the notion that the mind, as asylum of reason, must be granted power and dominance over the corruption of flesh and body.

Figure 14
Japanese body tattoo
Source unknown



Foucault explodes this ancient tradition, theoretically inspecting the very institutions which capture and punish errant bodies: insane asylums and penal institutions. According to Flynn (1993), "What Foucault is charting is a *displacement* in the point of punishment from body to body-*and*-soul in nineteenth-century practice as well as 'a whole new system of truth,' of knowledge, techniques, and 'scientific' discourses concomitant to this displacement ..." (p.280). However, what is relevant to the discourse of the body is not only Foucault's exploration of displacement of body, but how his work locates the body in contemporary critical theory by mapping somatic cartographies of power. Bordo (1993) observes:

For Foucault, modern (as opposed to sovereign) power is non-authoritarian, non-conspiratorial, and indeed non-orchestrated; yet it nonetheless produces and normalizes bodies to serve prevailing relations of dominance and subordination. Understanding this new sort of power requires, according to Foucault, two conceptual changes. First, we must cease to imagine "power" as the *possession* of individuals or groups - as something people "have" - and instead see it as a dynamic or network of non-centralized forces. Second, we must recognize that these forces are not random or haphazard, but configure to assume particular historical forms, within which certain groups and ideologies *do* have dominance. (p.26)

As Ondaatje (1993) observes, we are cartographies of culture, histories are tattooed upon our bodies, mapping our subjectivity. Foucault's exploration of issues of power, institutionalization, and eros explicates this theory of bodily construction and its meaning for post-structuralist and postmodern theorizing. According to Fuery (1997):

From the locating of the body in different discourses, the dividing practices of these discourses and their institutions (medicine, forms of discipline, madness), and the development of sexuality as a cultural process, Foucault has worked towards a methodology that often foregrounds the body in its analysis of a wide range of social institutions and hermeneutics. For Foucault, the body is central to formations

of meaning - how we, as subjects, are determined by our body, and how we become determining agents through our body. Part of the legacy of this highly influential work has been a whole set of analytic procedures based around the body as discourse, and the discourses of the body. (p.86)

Ironically, Foucault's focus on captive bodies metaphorically illustrates the failure of the postmodern project to liberate bodies from the incorporeality of post-structuralism and deconstructive discourse. Theoretical bodies are still dis-embodied bodies, snared in textuality, but absent of flesh and bone. As Spretnak (1997) observes:

To be truly postmodern is to reject that discontinuity by opening the box to connect anew with our larger context: the Earth, the cosmos, the sacred whole. Yet the deconstructionists move in the opposite direction, taking the focus down from the level of human projects to the level of "language games" (construction of concepts). They uphold the modern body-mind split by asserting an inner version of social construction whereby culture (mind) projects assumptions and other concepts onto dumb matter (the body) - the usual one-way construction of meaning, according to both Cartesian and deconstructionist thought. The inauthentic individual, trapped by the language games and power plays of his or her culture, feels more acutely than ever the radical discontinuity between self and the rest of the world. (p.66-67)

Contemporary feminism takes further issue with the dematerialization of the postmodern Foucaultian body, for his "body" is a de-gendered body, denied distinguishing genitalia. "And for women, associated with the body and largely confined to a life centered on the body ..." states Bordo (1993), "Culture's grip on the body is a constant, intimate fact of everyday life" (p.17). Bordo even goes so far as to discredit Foucault and post-structuralism for their role in the liberation of bodies in contemporary discourse, stating:

Almost everyone who does the "new scholarship" on the body claims Foucault as its founding father and guiding light But neither Foucault nor any other post-structuralist thinker discovered or invented the idea ... that the "definition and

shaping" of the body is the "focal point for struggles over the shape of power".

That was discovered by feminism, and long before it entered its marriage with post-structuralist thought. (p.17)

"I am still nobody," states Pagano (1995, p.341), acknowledging the absence of gendered bodies. "It has been noted that postmodernist philosophies and literatures really say nothing new to women whose lives are defined by their position in relationships to others, whose selves, to borrow the jargon, are always already disseminated" (p.340).

I too felt very much a "nobody" when I was unceremoniously "dumped" by my common-law partner in my mid-twenties after a five year live-in relationship. I recall the shock and betrayal of those days, and the feeling that my existence, my destiny and my body were no longer in my control. At first my body responded by shedding the shape I had developed, flesh that I see now as a metaphoric shield which had protected me from the care/lessness of this relationship. A large lump developed in my throat and I was unable to pass food through it. Shingles erupted on the surface of my belly, but I felt the pain of this affliction deep inside my body. Twenty pounds disappeared from my five foot one frame. My parents were so distressed by the physical changes in me that they bought me a ticket to visit an old girlfriend on the coast. Refreshed by the journey, I returned to Winnipeg determined to reclaim my mind and my body, and enrolled in an aerobics class at the local community centre.

Two years later, I was back at that same community centre, but now as the instructor. The training, discipline and inventiveness of fitness leadership training gave me new confidence and vitality. I abandoned cigarette smoking, the first amongst my chums to do so. Vacations and weekends were now spent hiking, biking and running with my husband Lloyd. I also encouraged the women in my class to feel good about their bi-weekly commitment to fitness, a struggle to fit into days crowded with caring for others.

For some women, however, bodies are disputed territories, battlegrounds for power and resistance. During my time as an aerobics buff, I often attended fitness classes

at a challenging aerobics studio in Osborne Village. A former ballerina often attended the classes. When I worked out behind her, I could see the shape of her pelvic bones, her spine and her backbone through her tights. I also noticed that her legs and arms had grown a coat of thick hair in an attempt to heat her fat-free body. After the class she would dash to the change room and leap on the scale, hoping that the vigorous work-out had caused her to shed those last stubborn pounds which clung to her emaciated frame. Club members were so distressed by her gaunt presence that they asked the club to ban her from the facility.

The feminist project has long concerned itself with returning power over women's bodies to women. Martusewics (1992) remarks, "The body is recognized as the historical site of the objectifications of women, but, in the refusal to repeat the denial of the female, woman's body is reclaimed as a source of metaphor for multiplicity and difference" (p.145). According to Miedema, Stoppard and Anderson (2000), "Men's bodies are viewed as the norm and any deviation is defined as 'unnatural' and often pathologized" (p.13). Women were once institutionalized for "hysteria", for lesbianism, for post-partum depression. Women's bodies have been long ignored in medical research and clinical trials, and therefore the effects of particular drugs or procedures on women's bodies were unknown. For example, it was only recently revealed that antibiotics render oral contraceptives ineffective.

Recall the Boston Women's Cooperative (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 1998) and their publication, Our Bodies Ourselves (now available in its 25th edition). For young women growing up in 1960's and 70's this was our "body bible", our operator's manual if you like, where we learned about the beauty, the wonder and the capacity of our very own bodies. Women began to reclaim childbirth and to speak openly of bodily functions and malfunctions, developing support groups, rewriting medical procedures, and reviving the lost knowledge of natural processes and natural healing. Through critical discourse, feminism has forged an identity of materiality and difference for women and their bodies, recognizing how the political play of power upon our bodies and

the pressure to conform to culturally constructed (or computer fabricated) images of bodies has hijacked control of women's bodies. According to Bordo (1993):

Feminists first began to develop a critique of the "politics of the body," however, not in terms of the body as represented... but in terms of the material body as a site of political struggle.... focusing on the "direct grip" ... that culture has on our bodies, through the practices and bodily habits of everyday life. Through routine, habitual activity, our bodies learn what is "inner" and what is "outer", which gestures are forbidden and which required, how violable or inviolable are the boundaries of our bodies, how much space around the body may be claimed, and so on. These are often far more powerful lessons than those we learn consciously, through explicit instruction concerning the appropriate behavior for our gender, race and social class. (p.16)

Schooling, as the place of such explicit instruction, has been long recognized as a deeply politicized milieu (Apple, 1985; Giroux, 1981). Therefore, in education, feminist theorists are claiming territories of recognition and of difference. Pagano (1995) theorizes that it is through our differences that we begin to know ourselves and others. It is within the social and cultural friction of difference that we understand our limitations and the circumscriptions of others. She states, "Education, which aims at the incorporation of each of us into the body politic, struggles to do so against the body's difference and must therefore deny both bodies and differences. And yet only uniqueness, the difference of bodies from others, guarantees identity" (p.348).

Reflecting upon French theorist Luce Irigaray, Martusewics (1992) describes how Irigaray seeks to expose "how the feminine finds itself defined as the negative image in male discourse ... by reclaiming the female body as the celebrated location of women's unique pleasure, her desire and her difference" (p.142). Additionally, in his book Absent Bodies, Drew Leder (1990) acknowledges the "dys-appearance" of female gaze and accompanying subjugation of the female body under the controlling hegemony of the masculine gaze:

Within our culture women tend to be more conscious of their bodies than men.... However, much of this self-consciousness relates to a rupture in mutuality and a discrepancy of power.... It is the gaze, the projects of men that are culturally definitive. Hence women are not full co-subjectivities, free to experience from a tacit body. Women are thus expected to pay meticulous attention to their surface appearance, including hairstyle, make-up, chest, weight, figure, and skin tone. This exhibits the principle of social dys-appearance; one incorporates an alien gaze, away, apart, asunder, from one's own, which provokes an explicit thematization of the body. (p.99)

Clearly the Cartesian duality of mind/body split is further fragmented as feminist critical theorists deconstruct the discourse of bodies, allowing a dichotomous rendering of the feminine body to emerge.

Writing in 1990 and 1993 respectively, neither Leder nor Bordo could have predicted the contemporary obsession with body modification. We have pushed our bodies as far as starvation, excessive exercise, and fad diets can alter them. Contemporary bodies are now multiply-pierced, tattooed and even branded. Competitive sports are sites of altered bodies as well. For example, Olympians' bodies are no longer vessels of physical purity; athletes go so far as to secrete the blood and urine of strangers inside their bodies, so that sporting officials conducting drug testing will not discover the anabolic cocktail of engineered steroids and hormones which fuel their bodies. Younger and younger men and women are obsessed with permanently altering their developing bodies with plastic surgery, requesting breast implants, facial surgery and liposuction, instead of SUV's, for their sweet sixteenth birthday. Tragically what is occurring here, both culturally and socially, is not emancipation and empowerment for women's bodies, but rather, that men too have fallen victim to the hyper-fantasy of the "perfect body". Statistics from the American Society of Plastic and Reconstruction Surgeons record that annually over 99,000 American men undergo procedures such as nasal reshaping, calf implants, face lifts and

liposuction. (Gordon, 2001, p.2; see also Gilman, 1999 for a complete history of aesthetic surgery.) The quest of reclamation for dichotomous bodies reaches full circle with this inter-gender obsession.

3.2 Igniting Bodies: Rekindling Curriculum Inquiry for the Senses

June 11, 2001

I return to the office after a week of "writer's retreat" at the cottage. Within hours, work begins to erode my sense of centeredness and peace. My computer has been tampered with by a technician unfamiliar with the Macintosh platform, and it takes me hours to get all the programs restored, emails answered, my network connection to printers and colleagues re-attached, telephone calls accessed and answered. I feel as if I'm juggling, the balls are all in the air, and one by one they drop on my head.

I reflect upon my "dreamtime" at the lake. I spent many hours each day engrossed in research. I treated my body gently, taking long walks and daily runs; I researched recipes in unfamiliar cookbooks, and prepared delicious dinners which I served accompanied by a daily ration of one glass of fine wine. My sleeps were long and comfortable. I was truly snug in bed, each night lulled to sleep by the sound of gentle waves on Lake Winnipeg, feeling secure with my three pets nestled about the contours of my body.

I awoke each day feeling well-rested, and greeted the rising sun with amiable anticipation. Of course I did some gardening. On one such day, I accidentally dug up a mysterious water-filled pit, which I quickly re-covered, but mostly I avoided physically exhausting or pushing myself.

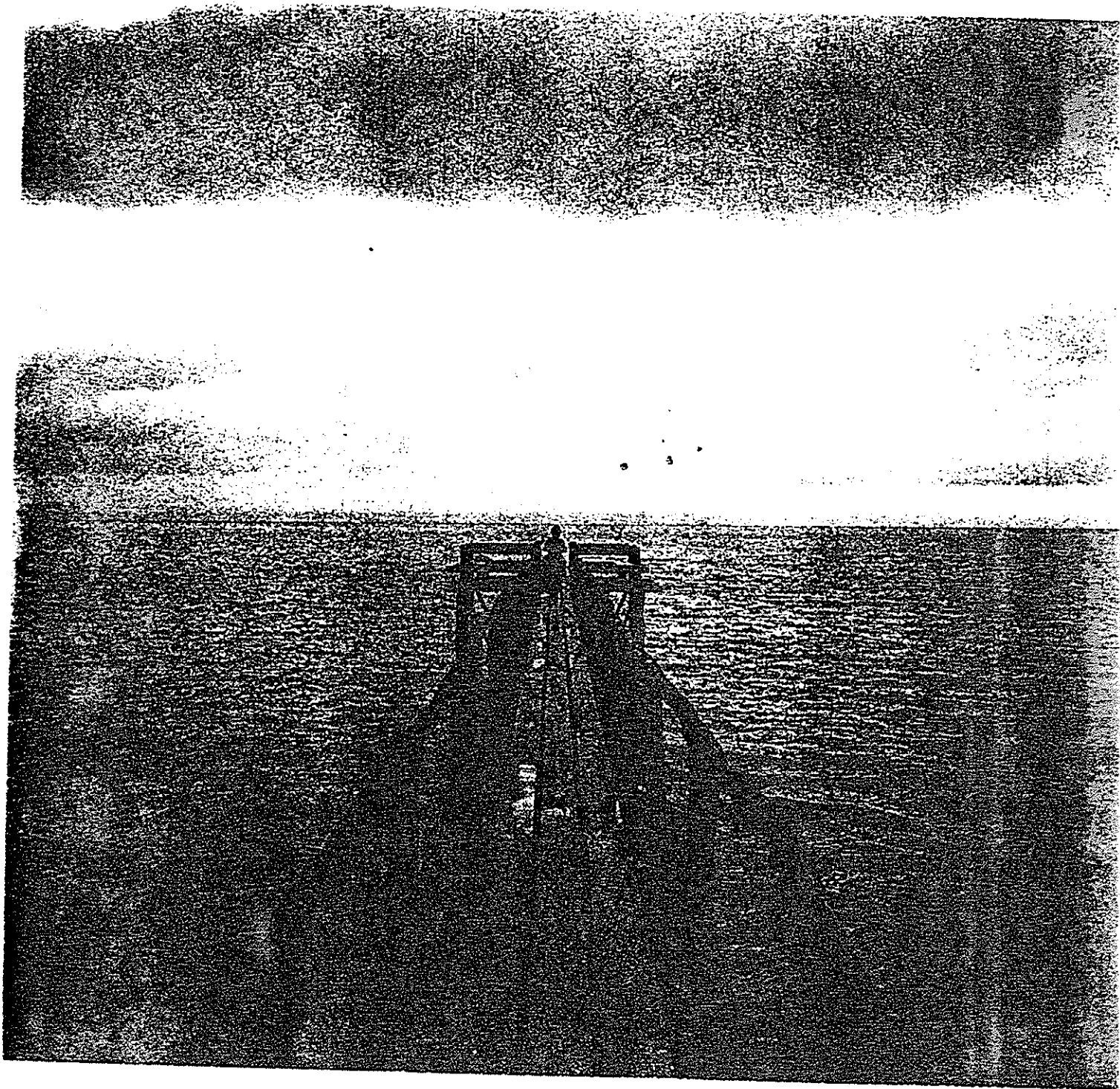


Figure 15
Whytewold pier, August 2000

I recall those days as centered, focused and peaceful. Reflecting on my ability to balance research and physicality, I recognize that it is during the days of writing, rather than those of research, that I feel the strongest compulsion to counter the mindful intensity of writing with the physicality of labour. Gardening refreshes my mind when I reach a point of creative stagnancy, but I must be cautious not to over-commit myself physically during those episodes, for then the balance is terminated and I lose the discipline and the energy to re-enter the writing.

While critical feminism moves the body closer to corporeality, it is phenomenological theory which "sings the body electric", fully acknowledging the body as a site of knowledge, of sensation and of materiality. According to Merleau-Ponty (1964):

There is a human body when, between the seeing and the seen, between touching and the touched, between one eye and the other, between hand and hand, a blending of some sort takes place - when the spark is lit between sensing and sensible.... (p.163)

Our bodies - touching and sensing, seeing and tasting - are both marked and made, "encrusted" by culture and nature and simultaneously caught in "the fabric of the world". Phenomenology brings flesh and bone to theory, acknowledging the fragility and wonder of skin, the corporeal perturbation of the senses, and the joy of physical movement. Bodies become anchored in space and time, orienting and attaching us to natural and lived worlds. Again, hear Merleau-Ponty (1964):

We grasp external space through our bodily situation. A "corporeal or postural schema" gives us at every moment a global, practical, and implicit notion of the relation between our body and thing, of our hold on them. A system of possible movements, or "motor projects" radiates from us to our environment. Our body is not in space like things; it inhabits or haunts space. It applies itself to a space like a hand to an instrument, and when we wish to move about we do not move the body as we move an object. We transport it without instruments as if by magic, since it is

ours and because through it we have direct access to space. For us the body is much more than an instrument or a means; it is our expression in the world, the visible form of our intentions. (p.5)

As the phoenix of reconstructive postmodernism rises from the ashes of post-structuralism and deconstructivism, inquirers seek to weave new narratives of meaning. With gender, race, sexual preference and privilege acknowledged as territories of excludedness and exclusivity, epistemologists must abandon notions of universal meaningfulness. While some might mourn what seems like an end to global narratives (which actually still exist in the guise of corporate border-crashers), human multiplicity can now be interpreted through our own bodies, allowing for a dialogical mosaic of experience to emerge. Bruner (1973, cited in Doll 1993) states, "I am convinced that we should do better to conceive of growth as an empowering of the individual by multiple means for representing his world, multiple means that often conflict and create the dilemmas that stimulate growth" (p.118). Diane Ackerman (1991), author of A Natural History of the Senses comments, "The great affair, the love affair with life, is to live as variously as possible ..." (p.309). Thus to be an active participant in the global dialogue, we must acknowledge that meaning is formed within each of our bodies, entering into the conversation with a greater understanding of ourselves and a commitment to further self-dialogical evolution.

By reclaiming the textuality of our bodies, we begin to acknowledge how we are shaped by nurture and nature, by schooling and geography, and by inward and outward interactions, and how this ebb and flow of sensation and culture allows us to develop multiple readings of self and of world. According to Johnson (1987):

We have bodies that are acted upon by "external" and "internal" forces such as gravity, light, heat, wind, bodily process, and the obtrusion of other physical objects. Such interactions constitute our first encounters with forces, and they reveal patterned recurring relations between ourselves and our environment. Such

patterns develop as meaning structures through which our world begins to exhibit a measure of coherence, regularity and intelligibility. (p.13)

Within the discourse of the phenomenological body, there is an acknowledgment of this paradox of bodies. While bodies are palimpsests of communality, they are also material vessels of uniqueness and difference. Leder (1990) acknowledges this paradox, observing that the physical geography of bodies provides the stance through which we can begin to contrast, to construct, and to connect our sense of being and of world.

Recognizing the physical presence of our bodies within culture allows us to begin to re-situate bodies within the web of nature. Abrams (1996) observes, "to acknowledge the life of the body, and to affirm our solidarity with this physical form is to acknowledge our existence as one of earth's animals..." (p.47). While bodies were once banned from rationalist discourse because they marked us as animalian - creatures of instinct, of impulse and of corporeal appetite - the reclamation of physical bodies in theory and action forces a timely recognition of the temporal, the spatial, and the environmental requirements of physical bodies: water, food, shelter. As Ackerman (1991) states, "Our senses define the edge of consciousness..." (p.xv). We acknowledge the life of our body through the phenomenology of our senses, mingling the scents, sounds, the sights and textures of the world with that of our bodies. The smell of diesel exhaust mingling with a foggy cool September day always returns me to the streets of Amsterdam, circa 1980. Certain food aromas recall childhood meals, flushing our bodies with a sense of comfort and security, or alternatively, fear and anxiety. Learning through the senses brings us into contact and understanding with the lived-world. In our daily lives we can pause to reflect on a particular sensuous stimulus, like the feel of fine cloth, or softness of a cat's fur, or the spicy scent of a yellow rose. Alternatively we can be "wide-awake" to the symphony of our senses, allowing an entire spectrum of sensate experiences to pre-empt our consciousness. Papanek (1995) observes:

We are endowed with five senses and more: we have sensory nerves which make us aware of the body position and movement in relation to a space (kinaesthesia); we have thermal receptors which register warmth and cold; we have visible and involuntary micro-muscular responses that psychologists have recorded when we watch sports or look at paintings (haptic muscular sensitivity); a "third eye" (intuition) and much else. It is in the interaction of all our senses that we can begin to really see - to experience. (p.76)

The sterility of our classrooms and our workplaces deadens our senses. Our homes and offices are hermetically sealed off from the outdoor world, and then artificially "freshened" with a toxic stew of cleaners, air-fresheners and deodorizers which mingle with chemicals off-gassing from our furnishings, floor coverings and paints. Allergies and asthma plague Canadian populations; one in five children suffer from breathing difficulties which make their daily lives and encounters with the natural world difficult, if not deadly. Why?

June 21, 2001

What is weeding but an opportunity to commune with the garden at its most intimate level? I see tiny insects living out their lives in the understory of the garden. Tiny oak seedlings send long sinuous tap roots deep into the earth. I wrap the stocks about my finger and pull, hoping to dislodge them. My finger turns red and painful from the difficulty of this task. I wonder at the itinerant roots of the overgrown False Solomon's Seal and Lily of the Valley. Each are effective ground covers, thriving in the dry soil that rings the twin oaks, but their itinerant habits must be controlled. The Goat's Beard buzzes with a troop of bumble bees. I must move the globeflowers from its foot, as it has flourished at the back of the flowerbed. I pull out reams of Creeping Campenulla, and grass which never grew when this was a lawn! Wild mint and volunteer cilantro intrude upon the hostas. I pull them out too and the oils from the leaves mingle on my hands, creating an exotic olfactory cocktail. I cup my hands about my nose and breathe deeply.

The cleavature of body from mind in Western rationalist thought has allowed for the extended proliferation of human destruction upon this planet. We witness the elimination of species of plants and animals and the downsizing of human cultural diversity every day. We have divorced our intentions from our actions, choosing to remaining ignorant of the effects of our conduct upon on our shared world. The unconscious purchase of a child's sweatshirt at the local Walmart means that potentially, somewhere in a developing country, a human exodus has begun, as agricultural workers relocate to urban slums in hope of employment in sweatshop compounds. A Sunday round on the neighborhood golf course could mean that the chemicals used to encourage the green links leach into the nearby river or stream or water hazard, causing frog mortality and mutation to increase, and thereby decreasing the amphibian population, which in turn increases the use of chemicals required to control the exploding mosquito populations. We are woven into the fabric of the world, and so each time that we manipulate a thread, vibrations are felt throughout the web of life. Note that our increasing demands for energy, for space, for consumer goods, for plentiful food and water are acquired at great cost to someone, or something, somewhere. Our electrical energy comes from rivers and lands expropriated from indigenous people. Displaced from traditional geographies, they seldom benefit from their loss, often living in communities without electricity, sewage treatment or clean water. "Mega-hydro projects have huge environmental and social impacts," states Jonah Clark, spokesperson for Manitoba's Cross Lake band. (Winnipeg Free Press, June 21, 2001, p. A6) A group called the Customers for Responsible Energy has recently launched a "culture jam" against Manitoba Hydro, juxtapositioning a poster of a crying aboriginal child with the slogan "Where is the heart in power smart?" over one of Hydro's corporate images of a happy little white baby. The beautifully uniform fruits and easily accessed off-season vegetables we harvest from our local grocery giants are grown in Mexican plantations with toxins banned from use in Canada. Studies show that the people of these regions, agrarian workers and villagers alike, suffer an increasing variety of developmental, gestational and

pathological conditions caused by the chemicals used to grow our "healthy" treats. Our own fertile agricultural lands have been devoured by unfettered suburban sprawl, and the tracts which remain are converted into massive "factory" farms. Each of us can be implicated in these events, through our actions, our thoughts, and our complacency. As acclaimed environmentalist David Suzuki states, "Everything is connected to something else, nothing exists in isolation" (Kuxhaus, 2001, p. A7).

Indeed it is through our corporeality that we begin to sense our connectivity to these people, these places and these events. There is a universal imperative for clean water, clean air, and untainted produce. The precariousness of these resources has been recently highlighted by the Walkerton, Ontario tainted water tragedy, where human neglect and sheer stupidity caused the death and untold suffering of the people of this small rural town. These stories pepper Western society. We have failed, collectively, as an educated, informed, "democratic" society, to express our moral and cultural outrage about these situations, allowing "others" to suffer in silence. Papenek (1995) agrees:

Today we find that modern buildings can make people ill, sometimes fatally. We seem incapable of relating the physical and psychological discomforts we suffer to the dangerous conditions that exist in our homes and workplaces. Even when some of these hazards are identified and discussed, people seem oddly unwilling to act to improve their chances for better health and survival. (p.101)

The human tragedy of Love Canal, the streets in New Mexico paved with toxic waste, sick building syndrome in the 1980's, the annual death of thousands, no billions of migrant songbirds splattered upon the facades of urban skylines - within each of these tragedies there is a story of how someone was responsible for making decisions in darkness, decisions which placed the bodies of so many in peril. Perhaps a discourse of greed, fuzzy economics and fragmentation, separates decision from effect. Individual profit and gain is so often prioritized over human health and physical safety. Sardello and Sanders (1999) suggest that the contemporary cultural diet of disorder and deprivation through the

artificiality of contemporary environments anaesthetizes our sensate abilities. "If our senses do not give us the true qualities of the outer world, we become surrounded by wholly mechanical representations of the world" (p.226). Divorced from the natural world and our own natural qualities and abilities, we become satisfied by simulacra. The victims of our economic and our environmental decisions become mere abstractions. Yet, as Sumara and Davis (1998) observe:

Our bodies simultaneously separate us *from* as they place us *in* relationship to one another. Further, the body's shape is not a mere matter of physical unfolding or biological maturation. Ongoing daily experience - our continuous acting in the world - also plays a role. We are shaped by as we participate in the shaping of the contexts in which we live, physically and phenomenologically. (p.80-81)

Separate ships, we sail upon the same seas. What has produced this paradigmatic polemic of passivity and dominance? Does the deliberate physical and sensual impoverishment of our lived-environments also shape our complacency in these crucial quality-of-life issues? And then, what of the responsibility of schooling, our greatest and most powerful social filter? According to Shapiro (1999), "It is with the body that one connects existence with a desire for change. Participation of the sensing, feeling, perceptive body is required to make sense of one's everyday life. Conceptualization is not enough for change" (p.38). To put the heart back into culture, we must put the body back into schooling. Educational inquiry which embraces the body - theoretically, sensually, and physically - optimizes conditions for global connectivity and universal human caring. Sardello and Sanders (1999) speak to this imperative:

If the senses are effectively cut off from consideration as important to education, if the epistemology of learning does not take into account the preconceptual domain of the living body as the nexus of inner awareness and action in the world, there is no possibility of educating toward a harmonious relation between the individual and the wider world. (p.225)

In my overview of the literature of the body, I have observed that emancipatory inquiry seeks not only to reclaim bodies in theory, but to re-unite body with mind and spirit in thought and action. Clearly, to rise to our full capacity and responsibility as sentient members of the living community of this planet, we must seek such a symphonic embodiment. Each day spent in "cube farms", each day that someone must boil his or her water, each day a woman miscarries because of toxins in the food she eats, is a day of bodily denial. Haug (1987 in Shapiro, 1999) observes that "Whereas previously it was the mind that was to gain mastery both over body and nature, it is now the body that is to be saved from the ravages of the scientific and technical revolution..." (p.21). A corporeal liberation of our theoretically captured bodies is optimized by attentiveness to dailiness in decisions and action. According to Snowber (1999), "The body has a pulse all of its own and continues to articulate much of what is going on within us. Our task is to find ways to be attentive to its voice, learning to listen to its bold proclamations as well as its more subtle notes of distress" (p.18). Bodies in distress cry out for fresh air to breathe, grow tumors in reaction to environmental toxins, refuse to sing. Cull-Wilby (2000) observes, "As we fully respect and attend to whatever sensations or messages our bodies reveal, we tap wisdom beyond rational knowing. We cross boundaries that have limited our understanding of ourselves and our lives" (p.74). Yet, inquirers must be cautious about allowing the pendulum to swing too far the other way. In igniting the paradigm of the body we must be cautious to seek not further vertigo, but rather a new paradigm of embodiment which focuses on balance between mind and body. Sardelo and Sanders observe, "The sense of balance is the basis for our capacity to trust" (p.230). However, the body will always be trapped within its own duality, paradoxically existing - as gardens do - as captives between culture and nature. According to Eagleton (2000):

Culture, or human consciousness, must be anchored in the compassionate body to be authentic; the very word "body" recalls both our individual fragility and our generic being. But culture must not be reduced to the natural body, a process of

which death is the ultimate symbol, since this can lead either to being brutish prey to one's own appetites, or to a cynical materialism for which nothing beyond the senses is real. (p.102)

Polo: ... Perhaps the terraces of this garden overlook only the lake of our mind....

Kublai: ... and however far our troubled enterprises as warriors and merchants may take us, we both harbor within ourselves this silent shade, this conversation of pauses, this evening that is always the same.

Polo: Unless the opposite hypothesis is correct: that those who strive in camps and ports exist only because we two think of them, here, enclosed among these bamboo hedges, motionless since time began.

Kublai: Unless toil, shouts, sores, stink do not exist; and only this azalea bush.

Polo: Unless porters, stonecutters, rubbish collectors, cooks cleaning the lights of chickens, washerwomen bent over stones, mothers stirring rice as they nurse their infants, exist only because we think them.

Kublai: To tell the truth, I never think them.

Polo: Then they do not exist.

Kublai: To me this conjecture does not seem to suit our purposes. Without them we could never remain here swaying, cocooned in our hammocks.

Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities

3.3 Falling Bodies: New Territories for Education

Having been abruptly parted from the ledge of the Empire State Building, the body descends, with no terrain for a safe landing in view, through a stretch of gravitational pull. The only full-scale landing possible for the body on this path will either not be registerable by it or will be the one signalling and constituting its ceasing to exist.

The thought experiment requires the reader to enter this hurtling body. Who or what would the body be then? There is no time for who, nor is there time for what.

What rallies to be that which is there and to govern the body or the person whose body this is?

The body, with no time to spare for constituting a who, will have shaken loose from under its person, and will be moving as a what, a falling body.

Akakawa & Gins, 1994

Architecture: Sites of reversible destiny.

The body is also a traitor.

Jo Anne Pagano, 1995

The body as an educative site is an idea that runs counter to the notion that the mind is the location of all knowledge. Yet, I trace my public school experiences through the memories of my body. "It is the body that carries knowledge of a life ...", observes Shapiro (1999, p.99). I recall sitting on the back bench during team sports, the smell of the classroom, the rigidity of the seating, and the social scenarios of inclusion/exclusion played out in the hallways. These experiences have shaped my sense of self more than all the "facts" poured like concrete into my imprisoned mind. Shapiro (1999) observes, "The forming of our being grows out of our experiences. Experiences are perceived in coordination between our minds and bodies - that which forms our being. This forming is

the historically situated, culturally inscribed 'reality' in which we live" (p.26). According to Berman (1989, cited in Shapiro, 1999) body knowledge constitutes experience: "These things are what your real life is about, they reflect the things that matter the most to you, for they are experienced in the body" (p.27). Learners construct body experiences, memories and meaning through interactions with the living world. What in curriculum shapes this reality?

In the opening sequence to American novelist Walker Percy's (1980) novel, The Second Coming, protagonist Will Barrett is experiencing a "bad day" on his favourite local golf course. "On the first nine, his slices had carried him along the back roads of the new condominiums and villas that bordered the golf links" (p.62). As Barrett's body encounters unfamiliar landscapes beyond the manicured greens and fairways of the golf course, his memories of long suppressed experiences rise to consciousness. "Lives are lines of force which ordinarily run parallel and do not connect.... Lines of force were bent" (p.67). Encounters with the "rough" evoked new knowledge of events long suppressed, allowing for new understandings and meanings to be forged.

Artists Arakawa and Madeline Gins create environments that are as much sculpture as architecture, as much theory as reality. Known as *Sites of Reversible Identity*, these structures are designed to keep the body in a state of instability, a state which Arakawa and Gins (1994) believe reveal our true nature. "As the events of a person, although provisionally stable, are highly changeable in nature, the site of a person should be thought of as wide-ranging and continually on the move" (p.19). As Will Barrett's mind unravels, it pushes his body into the "rough", the landscape that lies between the manicured greens and fairways of his local golf course and the neighboring forest. Within this place of "betweenness", his corporeal memories are evoked and his destiny reversed.

How does it happen that a man can go through his life standing up, not himself and dreaming, eating business lunches and passing his wife in the hall, that it is only

when he lies bleeding in a swamp that he becomes as solid and simple as the shotgun beside him? (Percy, 1980, p.130)

Shapiro (1999) also evokes the idea of the "rough", when she refers to educational spaces which exist in sites "between domination and resistance ... where meaning is found, securing the living body as the material that holds both" (p.32-33). The "rough", as a landscape for and of the body, is a metaphor for sites of praxis where falling bodies discover new interpretations of lived-world. Arakawa and Gins (1994) suggest, "The body, through its senses and its movements, configures the world or, more precisely, each body generates a person who originates, read co-ordinates, the world" (p.18). Should that be so, then how does the awakening of body knowledge change one's own perception of reality? For Arakawa and Gins, it is within territories of risk - the "rough" - where the body awakens to new configurations of experience. "It is desirable to keep the body in a state of imbalance for as long as possible. The actions, the range of actions, possible to the body for righting itself and regaining its balance will both define and reveal the body's essential nature" (p.18). In Percy's (1980) novel, Will Barrett is a man who is in the process of recovering his body's "essential nature" through a process which mimics the state of imbalance that Arakawa and Gins promote both theoretically and physically through the landscapes that they create. Barrett is suffering a mild epileptic condition which causes him to fall, losing his orientation within the physical and cultural landscape of his lived-world. According to Waldenfel (1997):

It is only beings who are able to stand up who are able to fall down. By falling, we approach the borderline of our existence. While falling down or falling into an abyss, we undergo a sort of movement that is removed from our control and by which our body escapes from itself. (p.210)

Barrett's increasingly frequent seizures also bring forth a kaleidoscope of sensate perceptions - sound and scent become more profound; vision is intensified. As the misfiring neurons hurl themselves through Barrett's brain, old pathways of memory and

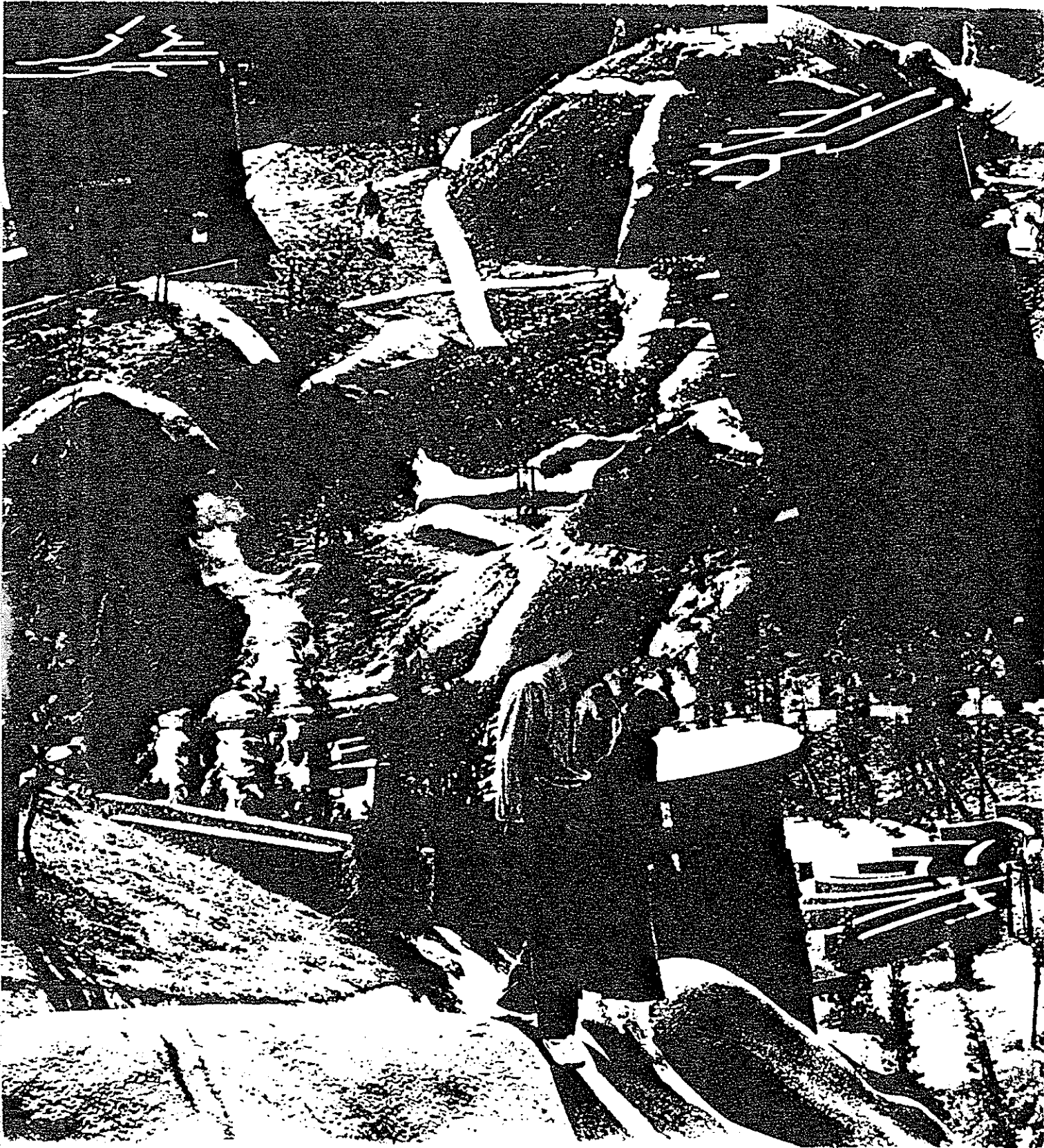


Figure 16

Arakawa & Gins, Site of Reversible Destiny - Yoro, Gifu Prefecture, Japan 1993-95

experience are jimmed open, leaving him in a state of flux, a state of imbalance. His memories unravel, exposing buried bodily memories. According to Eagleton (2000), "It is at the point where the Other is dislocated in itself, not wholly bound by its context, that we can encounter it most deeply ..." (p.96). These sensory episodes activate a new state of awareness for Barrett. "And strange to say, at the very moment of his remembering the distant past, the meaning of his present life became clear to him, instantly and without the least surprise as if he had known it all along but had not until now taken the trouble to know that he knew" (Percy, 1980, p.71). A reading of Husserl (in Caputo, 1987) suggests that Barrett has been thrust into a moment of hermeneutic flux, or *Auslegung*. According to Caputo:

Auslegung is a power of perfect return which makes consciousness transparent, exposing all the preconditions under which it labors. The repetition which repeats backward is unimpeded in its regress. It is able to seize consciousness in its beginnings and hold it fast. (p.57)

Meanwhile, in Percy's novel, Barrett's future love interest, Allison Huger, is experiencing a reversal of Barrett's afflictions. Following a series of instructions she wrote to herself prior to receiving radical shock treatment, Huger escapes from the mental hospital where she has been forced into a state of cognitive erasure. Huger's mind is devoid of consciousness; therefore, she must refer to her own notes to navigate her body. She has become reduced to what she has told herself to be.

Curriculum inquirers must ask in what ways does the "subordination and denial of body knowledge, or of sensate lived experience, inform the dominant ways in which we think, believe, and value" (Shapiro, 1999, p.31). Percy's characters pose an intriguing response to Shapiro's statement. Huger's mind a "tabula rasa"; it is essentially blank of any consciousness. She has nothing left but the the responses of her bodily movements and memories. Opposingly, Barrett's mind is flushed with sensation, derailing him physically. The story of how these two people find each other is a metaphor for the loss and

repossession of self in both mind and body. As Barrett and Huger, respectively, recover their corporeality and their consciousness, they become fully alive. A life fully lived is one in which the individual embraces awakens in all dimensions of self. Yet as Arawawa and Ginn and Eagleton (2000) suggest, flux between these sectors of mind and body is desirable, as it is within discordancies that knowledge is formed. "Human beings move at the conjuncture of the concrete and the universal, body and symbolic medium; but this is not a place where anyone can feel blissfully at home" (p.97).

The hermeneutic inquiry stance acknowledges that worlds exist within worlds, conceding that human consciousness exists within a constant state of flux. Like the images in a carnival house of mirrors, body and mind are vacillating sites of transforming identities and shifting perspectives. According to Caputo (1987), "The full perceptual object is thus a complex of perceived and apperceived, present and copresent, focal and horizontal. The object appears in the interplay 'between' them" (p.40). The body is a site of many such interplays: the social body versus the private body; the body politic and the physical body; the conscious or unconscious body. Bodies unite us to the elements of our planet - to earth, to air, to fire, and to water. Our DNA links our biological heritage with the emergence of single-celled organisms in the primordial earth. We share bodily attributes and qualities with every other human being on this planet. According to Leder (1990):

The body stands out at times of dysfunction only because its usual state is to be lost in the world - caught up in a web of organic and intentional involvements through which we form one body with other things. To say that the body is "absent", a "being-away", thus has a positive significance; it asserts that the body is in ceaseless relation to the world. As recessive being, these worldly relations are organic and pre-conscious. As ecstatic being, we are in conscious and purposive intercourse with the environment. There is a two-sided linkage of flesh and blood, ecstatic and recessive, each dimension of engagement mirroring the other. I gaze up at the stars ... at the same time I know that the carbon molecules from which my

body is made were forged in the furnace of dying stars. I am doubly connected to even the far reaches of the universe. We form one organic perceptual circuit.

(p.160)

Eagleton (2000) notes, "The body has a curiously dual status, as at once universal and individual" (p.111). Our bodies are both localities of desire and agents of desire. To "know", is to want for knowledge, to desire experiences which ignite mind and flesh.

According to Varela, Thompson, and Rosch (1991):

It is a matter of simple experience that our mind and body can be dissociated, that the mind can wander, that we can be unaware of where we are and what our body or mind are doing. But this situation, this habit of mindlessness, can be changed. Body and mind can be brought together. We can develop habits in which body and mind are fully coordinated. The result is a mastery that is only known to the individual meditator himself but that is visible to others - we easily recognize by its precision and grace, a gesture that is animated by full awareness. (p.28)

In acknowledging the shifting identities, the complexity, and the multiplicities of bodies, corporeal research highlights the paradox of body and mind unification. Yet curriculum inquiry could seek to initiate knowledge and experiences that potentialize the ability of learners to embrace fully-lived-lives. By listening to, informing, and including bodies in inquiry, researchers can inspire powerful forms of understanding and meaning-making.

Where then, lies the "rough" in contemporary schooling? Where is the place between "domination and resistance" where pushed into unfamiliar territory, the body and mind respond through memory and invention? In the more challenging courses during my graduate school experience, I have been pushed out onto the "slippery slope" of knowledge, where the ensuing sense of intellectual vertigo forced me to reconfigure my means of understanding the world. I recall these times of discomfort (indeed sometimes panic and nausea) and dis/ease as my most meaningful educational moments. Why then, do

we insist on emasculating education? Why are administrators allowed to cull, art, music, dance and physical activity from the curriculum? Why must teachers instruct to the lowest common denominator, to programmable outcomes, and to standard tests? According to Abrams (1996):

The sensing body is not a programmed machine but an active and open form, continually improvising its relation to things and to the world. The body's actions and engagements are never wholly determinate, since they must ceaselessly adjust themselves to a world and a terrain that is itself continually shifting. If the body were truly a set of closed or predetermined mechanisms, it could never come into genuine contact with anything outside of itself, could never perceive anything really new, could never be genuinely startled or surprised. (p.47)

We need a little resistant territory, a little of the "rough" in education. Emasculated forms of education can accomplish little if they "shut down" the body's natural ability to learn, to adapt and to grow in knowledge.

At the First Annual Curriculum and Pedagogy Conference in Austin, Texas, I attended a session hosted by Dr. Susan Finley. Susan is an artist, an educator and arts-based researcher at Michigan State University. Because of her interest in arts-based research, Susan has been exploring the culture of street youth, and has been involved in developing collaborative visual, literary and poetry-based portraits of these "kids". Previous to this, I was somewhat cognizant of the social problems which drive kids to the streets, and I had a minor awareness of the drugs, crime, and even mental conditions which keep youth on the streets. But I had never thought about street youth from an educational perspective. Not surprisingly, a 1997 Health Canada report verifies that the majority of homeless youth suffered from a sense of isolation and rejection in school. One youth responded, "I'd go to school and be scared at school and I'd go home and I'd be scared," demonstrating that neither school nor home were places of safety (Caputo, Weiler & Anderson, 1997, p.12).

Whenever I drive downtown, I see Winnipeg's street kids clustered in the Osborne Village area, either soliciting loonies for washing windshields, begging for food, money and transportation, or "hanging out" accompanied by large wolf-like dogs (which they use for protection) and other like-minded youths. But Susan's lecture started me thinking about education and learning both inside and outside of the culture of homeless youth. One such educational issue involves school attendance. In the United States, with children constituting forty percent of the homeless population, the education of homeless children is an administrative dilemma for schools with attendance, residency and guardianship regulations which may not be sensitive to the conditions of itinerant families (NCH Fact Sheet #10, 2001). Another is education and older children (known as "unaccompanied minors") who make up three percent of the American homeless population, and whose early departure from the learning milieu may contribute to life-long conditions of social alienation, poverty, drug and sexual abuse. In Canada, these issues are not so much of a consideration, as we do not have a large migrant worker population, and our climate is less conducive to homelessness. However, studies show that Canadian street youth also live dangerous lives, and participate in a wide range of criminal activities such as prostitution, drug trafficking or drug abuse, and theft (Brannigan & Caputo, 1993). One simply cannot speak of homeless youth without addressing the horrific conditions which have driven them to the street. For example, studies conducted in 1995 indicated that forty-six percent of American homeless youth had been physically abused and seventeen percent had been sexually abused in their own homes (NCH Fact Sheet #11, 2001). However, after I listened to Susan's session I began to consider how homeless youth live incredibly "bodied" lives and how the survival skills for such an existence were dependent upon the acquisition of body-knowledge. The activities of homelessness, such as finding shelter, food, transportation; the activities of prostitution, drug use, "squeegeeing", and theft, all emphasize the body as primary. Wardhaugh (2000) speaks to the homeless body:

The body is the most fundamental boundary for the individual, with the skin surrounding the body serving both to define the person and to separate them from their environment. The body assumes paramount importance for the homeless, in that the absence of a home that might serve as a second skin renders the body the first and often only line of defence against a dangerous world. The nature of bodily defensive reaction to the vulnerability of homelessness is of two general types: contraction or expansion. .. Both types of response are about altering and specifically reducing their bodily sheaths - the only boundary under their direct control - in order to maximise physical and psychological safety. (p.83)

Likewise, this bodily ebb and flow becomes a metaphor for the expansion and contraction of body territory, as homeless youth re-negotiate the urban public landscape, creating markets for commerce (boulevards, streets, back lanes, street corners), social centers (abandoned buildings, the spaces around shelters), and "safe" places for sleeping (empty apartments or "flop houses", beneath bridges, fire escapes). Street kids also have a flourishing art, music and poetry culture, which, as Susan mentioned in her lecture at the conference, is curiously dated, because street kids find the materials and influences for their art in the discarded debris of society. According to Hebdige (1979) art in this sense is a subcultural form with a wider contextual meaningfulness than what is often referred to as "high art" (commodity-based expression).

Rather they [subcultural art forms] manifest culture in the broader sense, as systems of communication, forms of expression and representation.... In the same way, sub-cultural styles do indeed qualify as art but as art in (and out of) particular contexts; not as timeless objects, judged by immutable criteria of traditional aesthetics, but as 'appropriations', 'thefts', subversive transformations, as *movement*. (p.129)

Body movement is a recurrent theme in street kids' expression and action. Following routes invisible to the hegemony, homeless youth migrate seasonally across

countries and international borders, yet remain in communication with each other through a complex network of cryptic graffiti and email. More recently, homeless youth have yolked themselves to the civil libertarian, environmental and anti-globalization movements, becoming empowered and emancipated through politicization (see the Homeless People's Network: <http://aspin.asu.edu/hpn>). What new kinds of learning do encounters with the urban landscape inspire? Does knowledge formed within this mode of experience awaken survival instincts long buried? What are the consequences of abandoning the known for the happenchance of the street, for while an existence marked by domesticity may dull the senses, the lives of street youth are often cut short by violence, addiction, and disease.

Arakawa and Gins suggest that inquirers should invite the educative body to fall, pushing the learner into uncharted territories, for it is there that new knowledge will be formed. It is curious that we have culturally inscribed the "fall of mankind" as an event that was precipitated by a bite from the apple of knowledge, suggesting that the acquisition of bodily consciousness (*eros*) exiled humankind from the blissful ignorance of life in the garden. What would we have become if we had remained caged like birds in the Garden of Eden, our every need provided for? Perhaps it was in the "rough", the place beyond the walls of the garden, that our bodies and our ways of knowing were formed in confrontations with the natural world.

Last autumn, I provided my sensory technology students with an simple experience that derailed their bodily expectations - an experience in the "rough". I removed the chairs from our classroom, conducting the class on carpet tiles under conditions of subdued light. Challenged to find a way to introduce students to furniture, I determined that the best way to begin to talk about furniture was in its absence. Further, I wanted the students to explore their bodies as an environmental sensing device. We began the discussion by talking about how our bodies felt in this new configuration. We also discussed corporeal anticipations, and students related how they had expectations of entering the classroom, tossing books on the tables, and assuming an attentive stance. The dialogue was lively, and students felt free

to wiggle, shift, and stretch their bodies. Students who rarely contributed to the classroom dialogue began to speak and share experiences. By way of an assignment, students were asked to analyze a seating device which they encountered daily, using their bodies as an empirical device to determine both the emotional and physical ramifications of the experience of "chair". Students chose to write about a wide range of chairs - the studio seating, chairs in their homes, a piano bench, the bench on the bus. While the caveat to this assignment was a recognition that student bodies are not all bodies, these students had never had the opportunity to use their bodies as an educative device. Students came away from the experience with a new somatic awareness, and a determination to honor their bodies in everyday situations.

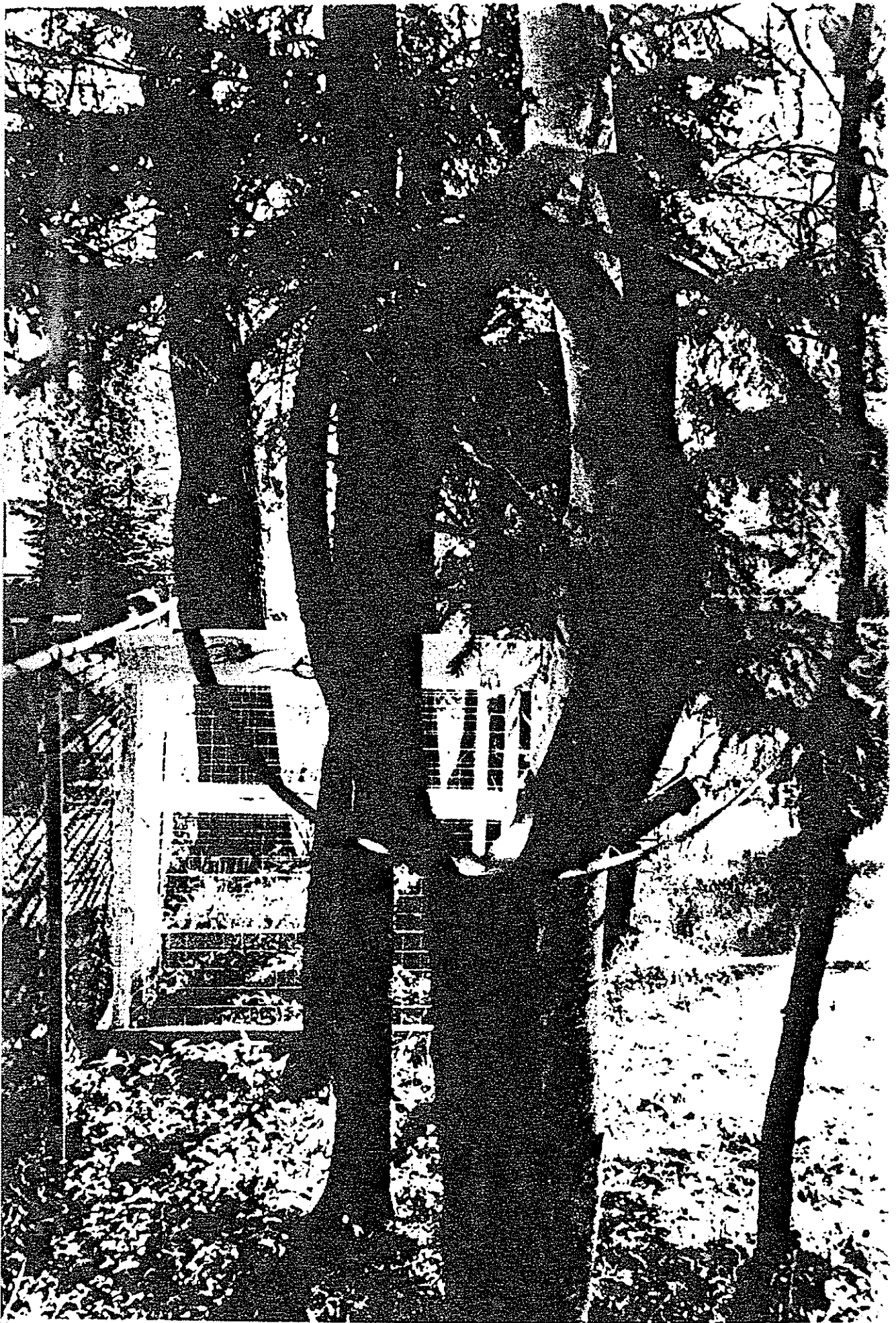
Why must we seek a place for the body in radical research? Shapiro (1999) observes, "Only when we begin to hear the impoverished nature of our rational language and begin to see the destructive work of our hands, can we begin to understand the power of human touch" (p.34). Perhaps educational encounters which challenge all aspects of human knowing, including the knowledge of the body, could invigorate new forms of knowledge. I detect rising discontent with schooling, with social conditions, with global economies, and with the state of our natural world. Fragmentation, dismay, helplessness, fear - these are but a few of the maladies that afflict our collective psyche. And witness the litany of blame - schooling, government, corporatization, globalization - each are cited players in the rise of these conditions. The penalty, however, is something we all suffer, in terms of rising human misery, environmental and cultural deprivation and the proliferation of a new global corporate caste system. Inquirers need to initiate new forms of critical praxis that could inspire human sensitivity, caring, and action. Body knowledge is one such epistemology which could potentialize such changes. As Shapiro (1999) notes, "We have learned to live so much in our heads that we no longer feel connectiveness to other living things" (p.98). Inquiry which consummates the unification of mind and body in holistic, experiential learning events could inspire new forms of human connectiveness. In

the words of Merleau-Ponty (1964), "My perception is not a sum of visual, tactile, and audible givens. I perceive in a total way with my whole being" (p.19).

June 23, 2001

The balance shifts, and I spend days at my desk, diving into academic texts, seeking emerging patterns in the research on bodies. Except for a few minor additions, the garden is largely ignored. It is just as well. Outside a forest tent caterpillar invasion is underway. The leaves on the trees have been systematically stripped. The caterpillar, or "worms" as they are commonly called, begin with the poplar and burr oak, moving from there to ash and birch, dogwood, wild roses, eating almost everything arboreal. Only the carragana and native maple are untouched. As they finish devouring each tree, the caterpillars rappel from the tree tops on silken threads, their falling bodies accompanied by leaf fragments and hundreds of tiny spheres of chlorophyll-spiked scat. I drove to my sister's place in Lac du Bonnet and witnessed the devastation across the forests of Manitoba. It looked like early spring; everything green had been devoured. I wonder if this is a natural plague or if there is something we humans have done to upset the balance of the natural world. What would be the effects of this invasion within the local ecosystem? I think about the migrant songbirds. Their tiny nests, usually so cleverly hidden in the foliage, are now exposed to predatory crows and blue jays. How does it all connect - the caterpillar plague, the life of the trees, the life of birds and insects, the cycles of nature? So complex. While I am a proclaimed organic gardener, the sheer numbers of "worms" has me contemplating some biological warfare, but what would be the effects of this intervention? Would I tip the scales in favour of nature, or instigate further imbalances? Or have we humans already committed some unseen environmental catastrophe which has optimized favourable conditions for this current plague of insects.

Figure 17
El Mundo - The World, constructed object
Whytewold, Manitoba, June 2001



Chapter 4 • Curriculum Inquiry as Spirit

This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.... If men spit on the ground, they spit on themselves.

Chief Seattle

July 3, 2001

I have cut down trees! Committed arboreal murder and sacrifice! Have I spit upon the earth? Have I destroyed habitat, disrupted animalian transportation routes, or diminished a food source?

Each day that I looked out my cottage window to the west, I obsessed about the arboreal cacophony in the garden. A huge ash tree interrupted the graceful skyward arch of a magnificent ancient birch clump. Where stark white limbs should have kissed the blue skies, the visual poetry was destroyed by a jumble of inter-species branches. Behind the giant ash was the remains of another large ash tree, but this had been topped to accommodate the hydro lines, leaving an effect not unlike an inverted corn broom. The threshold to the property fell between this odd "broom" tree and a mangled oak tree, making for an awkward transition between street and garden, between garden and trees. I performed my usual city contractor routine, searching the directory for three appropriately qualified foresters to rid the garden of these three trees. One felt it was beneath his efforts, another "charmed" me for a full half hour, bragging of his expertise and his "professionalism", but he could not possibly fit me in till sometime in August. I finally chanced upon a local fellow - a sort of jack-of-all-trades - who was willing to fell the giants for a mere \$225.00. Painter, lawn-care specialist, forester, recovered alcoholic, husband and father to seven children, Charlie arrived on-site and surveyed the situation, noting that the oak and the "broom" ash could be disposed of with little trouble. However

the largest tree - the ash - would require careful attention. As he surveyed the landscape, I realized he was planning to drop the entire thirty or forty foot tree into the cottage yard.

All week I worried that this man would maim or kill himself (leaving me morally indebted to his seven children), but I placed my trust and faith in his ability. When I returned to the site of the tree massacre, he had indeed accomplished this herculean task, without damage to property, other trees, or man. I was astounded at his vision - the understanding of tree, of gravity and of space that could allow a man, a boy, a saw and a tractor to enact such radical altering of the landscape - and survive.

But, oh so altered is this landscape! The road and our cars are now highly visible from the garden, as are the neighbors' cars, roads, cottages, trees, etc. We are exposed! I doubt the wisdom of my decision. The grass looks even more parched and undernourished, the peeling paint and rotting fascia of the cottage are so highly visible. But the birch tree looks magnificent, and the path to the cottage unwinds in a natural pathway to the back door. The other trees look more in scale, and they will benefit from less competition for nutrients, water, and air. But the site is barren and hot.

I start a "bush" to ease the transition between road and garden. Some local plants are featured: wild rose, dogwood, pincherry, cottoneaster, cranberries, currants; and some faster growing imports will help to ease the transition from barren to bush: lilac, spirea, and a magnolia I found for two dollars. I see that a leap of faith is required to re-vision the landscape. It is a difficult task to perform such drastic surgery on this damaged place, but in time the garden will take on a new shape, one perhaps closer in harmony and spirit to this place. I turn to William's book on gardens for comfort in my decision. Her writing reminds me of the sacred and the secular characteristics of trees:

People plant trees when someone dies or is born because trees, with their roots deep in the ground and their branches lifted toward heaven, are a picture of life itself. In the Norse myths Ygdrasil is a rowan tree with three roots: one in the underworld, one in the in the kingdom of men, and one in the realm of the gods.

The Nydhog serpent gnaws at the root in the underworld, steadily undermining the whole creation; meanwhile up in the branches four stags graze on leaves and drip magical dew into the mouths of sleeping Líf and Lífthrasir, the man and woman of the future. The first temples were sacred groves, and when, later, Greeks sculpted their columns of marble, they still recalled the trunks of trees, even as they also took on the proportions of the human figures. A great forest resembles a Gothic cathedral, but this is because those cathedrals were made to be like forests.

There is no simple resolution to the tension between a love for trees and a gardener's desire to grow many kinds of plants, or between a longing for shelter and shade and the realization that the tree planted today may not mature till the gardener has moved on to a different garden, or a different world. Contemplating planting or cutting down a large tree, gardeners must watch carefully, then decide; then they wait and watch the results of the decision. Grappling with tree riddles, one grapples with time and change, the stuff of life itself.

(Williams, 1998, p.207-208)

In Canada's Pacific coast forest, a war continues between those who view the ancient trees as the heart of the British Columbia economy and those who see them as crucial from both a sacred and a secular point of view. The fiscal stakes are high and the protective tactics are extreme. "Spikers" have developed new methods of sabotaging trees now that the forestry industry has developed methods to detect the large metal spikes they once drove into the trees. Protesters chain themselves to trees to protect them from the chain saw; a young woman named Julia Butterfly Hill lived for over two years in the canopy of a thousand year old California redwood named "Luna". In an interview with Mother Earth News she spoke of the life-lessons she gained from the experience:

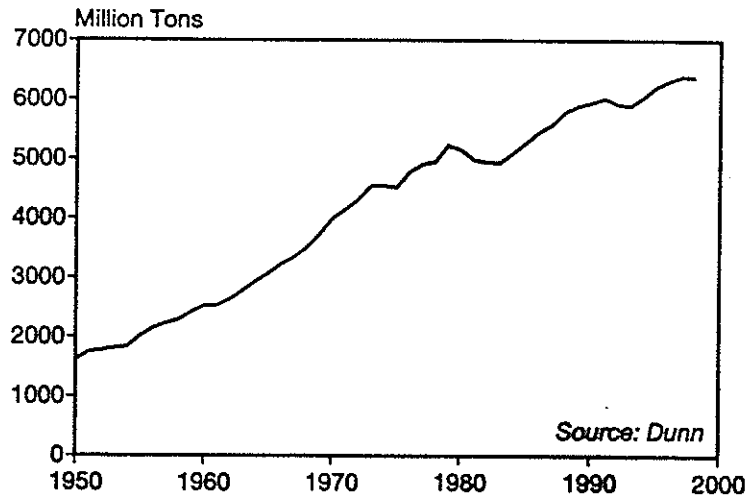
One time, before, I came down, I was holding Luna and crying and praying and asking myself, how will I hold this heart center when the world is trying to pull me in a billion different directions? How am I going to hold on to the lessons I've

learned from this perspective when I'm no longer in this perspective? It's a beautiful challenge, because in the challenge is a continuation of proving to people that it is possible. This heart center is so deep within me that I know it to be true. And it's not something that a teacher has to teach me or a politician has to tell me is legal or scientist has to tell me it's scientifically possible. It is a truth that I know to the very depth of my core. (Martin, 2001, p.5)

The wisdom of trees. The lessons of trees. Trees are essential members of the spiritual community of humankind, and of the ecological community of the forest. Researchers have recently discovered a crucial life-link between fish and trees in the coastal forests. As migrating salmon crowd the streams and rivers, bears and birds feast on the bounty, dragging the bodies of the fish into the forest where nutrients from the decaying bodies are utilized by the trees. Trees remind us of the temporality of humankind. Many of the giants of the British Columbia coast are hundreds of years old, yet in a brief, biting, buzzing, encounter with a chain saw, they are sacrificed to build houses for sprawling American suburbs, whose unfettered growth gobbles up prime agricultural land, pushing factory farms farther and farther into hinterlands, requiring the sacrifice of further forests. And so it goes, the circle, the web of life - we spit upon it.

It is said that rain forests are the lungs of the world. Our relationship with trees has a life-sustaining reciprocity: we produce carbon dioxide; trees absorb carbon dioxide; producing in turn oxygen, which of course, humans require to survive. Web of life, circles of sustenance, shared breath. Recall from chapter one that the word "spirit" comes from the Latin *spiritus* - breath. Breath is the life force, the spirit of humankind; breath is the gift of the forest.

World Carbon Emissions From Fossil Fuel Burning, 1950-98



World Production of Chlorofluorocarbons, 1950-97

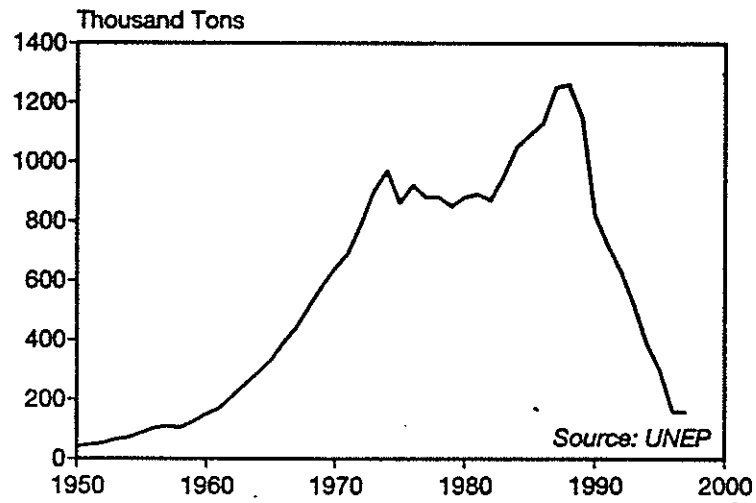


Figure 18

The air that we breath

(French, 2000, p.9,91)

According to Cheney (1999):

Missing in modern conceptions of knowledge is a sense of active and reciprocal communication with the non-human world. In an older understanding, knowledge emerges from a conversation between world and person, and our human part in the genesis of knowledge, in its most essential aspect is to prepare ourselves ethically and spiritually for the reception of knowledge. (p.141-142)

The spirit, the soul, the sacred, this is the abstraction which merges body and vision; this is the final grapple in the web of meaning which is this inquiry. What is meant by these words? Samples (1999) defines the "spiritual" as a manifestation of unity, a world view which embraces rather than divides and separates. "Sacred" is the expression of wholeness and oneness, the unity between all things. "Soul" is the connectivity that marries life and world. Lippard (1997) expresses spirituality as "a way of living the ordinary while sensing the extraordinary" (p.14). For Hockings, Haskell, and Lind (2001), spirituality and ecology are no more separate than mind and body, only interwoven aspects of each other. Therefore educational forms which embrace bodymind and ecospirit (bodyworld) promise a "re-imag(e)ing" of curriculum. Caputo (1987) speaks of "openness to the mystery" suggesting that spirituality is an ontological state of readiness, while Purpel (1999) observes a spiritual bankruptcy within contemporary society which he believes is brought about by cultural detachment and fragmentation from nature, stating that:

Study, reflection, and analysis cannot be at the center of an education for meaning, although they surely can and ought to be among the inevitable and valued partners in the task of naming and acting upon our faith. I believe that we are living in a time of widespread earnest and heartfelt searching for the other critical partners. (p.64)

Howard Gardner (1998) has recently expanded his pantheon of intelligences to include naturalist, existentialist and spiritual intelligences. For Gardner, spiritual intelligence has three components: a concern with the ethereal or cosmic issues, the achievement of a particular state of being, and the ability to influence others, a sort of

evangelistic spirituality if you will. Gregory Bateson (1979) believes that our spiritual health is connected to a “natural” state of being, an animal self. He observes that the word “animal” comes from the Latin *anima*, meaning breath and soul. For Haggerson (2001), spirit is the breath and soul of a “spirit centered wholeness” in education, a state of epistemological receptivity, transformative energy, and phenomenological understanding, which moves curriculum towards a new paradigmatic state.

The universality of spirit implies that, to cultivate its understanding, it must be for all students, not just for gifted ones. The history of the phenomenology of spirit is fraught with conflict and contradictions. Hence a curriculum concerned with its understanding, must promote not only attitudes of hope and criticism and skills of inquiry and questioning, but also patience for learning and inquiring about the infinite. (p.83)

What emerges for me is a terrestrial definition of spirituality, based on “land-based” constructions of self, grounded in body, in culture, and in nature. Spirituality is the life-sense of humanity, the life-breath which rises from the self through modes of thought and rhythms of body which are seeking, connecting and imagining; from authentic experiences within the cultural constructions which form our communities - schools, cities, parks, places of work, worship and healing; and finally, from encounters with nature - the place which sustains, refreshes and renews our spirits. Bowers (1995) remarks, “The fate of humans, in effect, is tied to a world of reciprocal relationships with other beings and forces that make up the life/spirit world” (p.319). Curriculum inquiry for spirit, is then both an ontological and an epistemological journey, which seeks to nourish self-knowing and being, in mind, in body, and in spirit, through modes of inquiry which engage, question, and suggest new ways of integrating self and world.

4.1 Curriculum Inquiry as Spirit - Encounters with Self

July 4, 2001

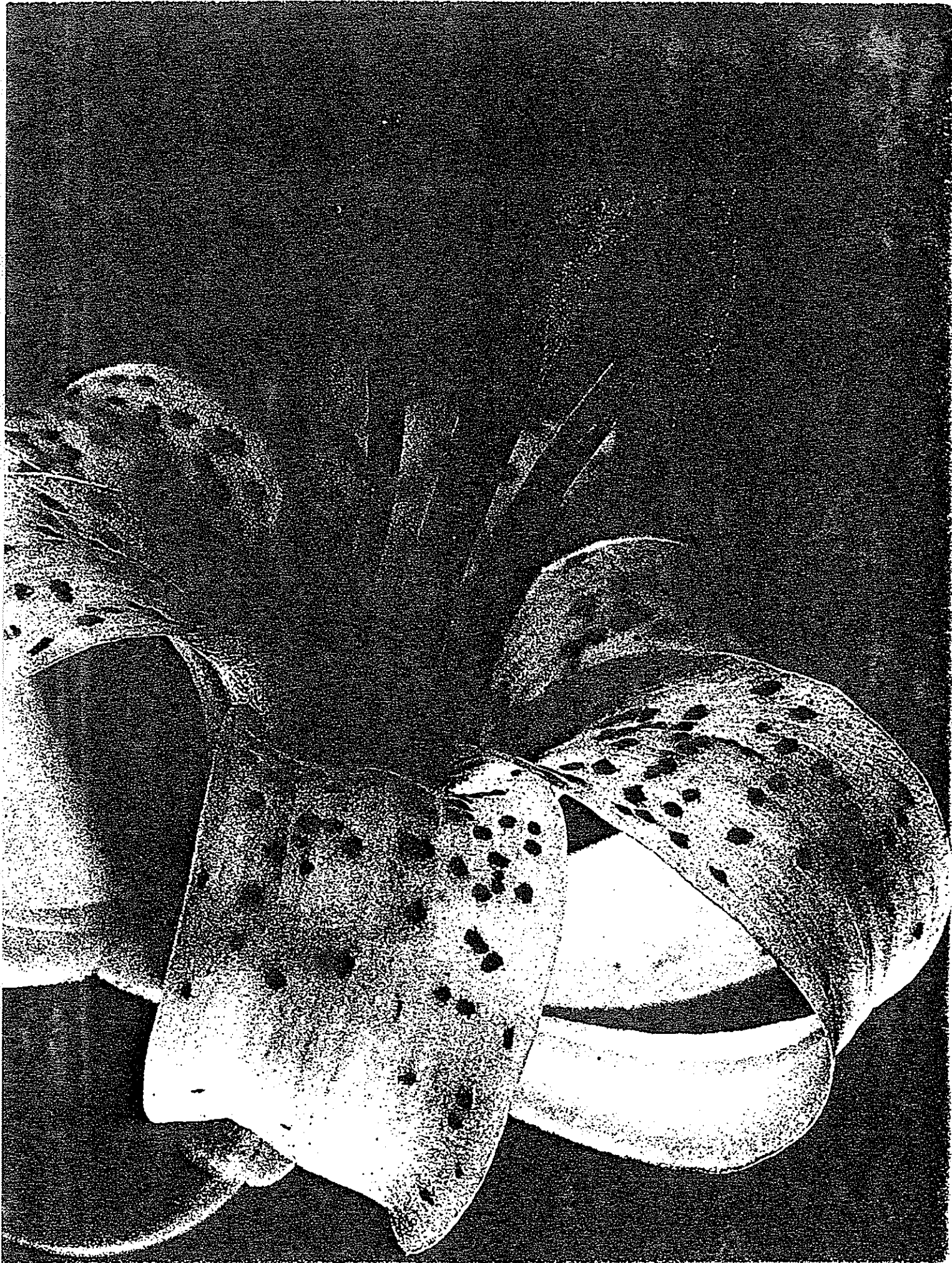
The garden of my imagination speaks to me through the black bearded tongues of bushy blue delphiniums. Tissue-petal oriental poppies flirt with my vision, their brazen orange blossoms shamelessly clash with the silver of the shining lake. The freckled liliun tigrinum, a transplant from my city garden, carries upon its green stems tiny bulblets of future generations, each posed to drop upon the soil, ensuring the continuance of its kind. The daylilies I started from seed which I gathered last autumn, which I over-wintered in my refrigerator, and nursed to life in tiny pots, rewards my efforts with a blaze of blossoms the color of a setting prairie sun.

The garden of my imagination is just that, a fantasy dance of invisible flowers yet to be.

Williams (1998) speaks of gardens-to-be, observing that the garden-that-will-be, exists already within the mind of the gardener. Williams describes how she used to escort visitors through her garden, calling into being with words the garden in the making. Then when observing a lack of reciprocal excitement, she would loose her vision of the garden, and see the garden as the visitor saw it.

Through their perplexity I began to see another garden: undeniably present, but sparse, incomplete, and littered with the equipment of everyday life: pajamas on the clothesline, rusty tractor parts dwarfing the rock-and-azalea configuration, trucks and cars rumbling and flashing through the gaps between the knee-high hedgerow plantings.... The visitors and I would part, embarrassed. Had I deluded them, or perhaps myself? Was the wonderful garden something I had only imagined? I would make dejected efforts to move a tricycle, cut the grass. Or I would go listlessly indoors, unable to face so much emptiness. (p.11)

There are days when I too feel "so much emptiness", when the garden which I struggle to marry to this damaged landscape disappears into a tangle of weeds, of hard-



scramble earth, of roots and rocks. Empty branches stagger across the sky, their leaves destroyed by the forest tent caterpillars. Now their cocoons are fastened to everything that they could not eat, like some sort of sticky spit-ball of twisted yellow insulation. The impatiens that I planted in the iris garden wilt in the strong eastern sunlight, their soft bodies droop upon the two or three lobelia that survived in this hot location. How unlike my elm-locked garden in Winnipeg, where these species thrive in the brief moments of sunshine that the mature canopy of trees grants them. Here in this foreign site, I have underestimated the strength of the sun. I have also forgotten how quickly invading dandelions, grass, plantain, and other interlopers - a chipmunk who excavated a foot-long trench underneath the daylilies - invade the absent spaces in emerging gardens, much like how a mother of growing children might forget the nuisance of a new baby. And insult of insults - my herb garden is dominated by two celery plants which I purchased at the local garden center in the guise of parsley!

However, in the garden of my reality, the seedlings I so carefully tended are thriving; the blush rose recovers from defoliation, the infant burr oak clump spits forth a new crop of bright green leaves, and tiny pincherry bushes poke their heads above the tall grasses and clover in the bush-to-be, each in their own way, illustrating the promise of this garden. What is a garden but an expression of hope, and of imagination, and of spirit?

Don't let your flower garden run down, as so many people tend to do at this season. Keep tall flowers well staked and cut out all your dead stalks. Keep edges trimmed and stir the soil on the surface as a weed preventive and to conserve moisture. Use a mulch to save labor and moisture. Use humus, peat, straw, or decayed leaves, at least two inches thick.

Water well when water is needed.

Roy Biles, The Complete Book of Garden Magic

If “vision” can be described as visibility, reflectivity, imagination; if “body” expresses the joy of movement, the ignition of the senses, and the sensation of risk; and if “spirit” means to breathing, to belonging, and connecting; then gardens express the kinds

of places where all of these notions unite. "Water well when water is needed" is a gardening metaphor which speaks about the need to continually care for our spiritual requirements, lest we wilt and fade away. As Cooper Marcus (2000) observes:

Many people passionately embrace the metaphor and reality of the garden because it enables them to marry two modes of thought - intuitive/logical, right brain/left brain, feminine/masculine- and by doing so to resolve certain inner conflicts that remain in the individual and the group psyche. We garden because that activity requires knowledge and intuition, science and nurturance, planning and faith.
(p.27)

In gardens we express our private vision, in public ways. We physically engage with our gardens - digging, cultivating, weeding, and planting - and in turn the garden rewards our efforts by delighting our senses. Engaging, imaginative, and contemplative, gardens and gardening evoke our spirit nature. Gardens are both a reflection of our making, and a reflection of ourselves. They mirror our place in the world existing as we do, between nature and culture.

I have contemplated this notion of gardens as simulacra before (Wilson Baptist, 2000), observing that, like curriculum, gardens are fabrications of nature and culture. Curriculum, for example, can, in its best constructions mimic nature by favouring dialogical, cooperative learning modes which encourage individualized interpretations of knowledge and environment. Opposingly, as in some gardens, the processes of nature are sometimes deliberately arrested - unruly growth is pinched, pruned, or plucked from the garden. The gardener, and the teacher, might impose strict order, weeding out any deviant forms, and fostering optimum conditions for non-sustainable agrarian or intellectual monocultures.

As with gardens, curriculum and curriculum inquiry must provide opportunities for personal engagement through imagination; physicality through movement and sensation; and contemplative moments for reflectivity and renewal if the re-visions of radical inquirers

such as Slattery (1995); Greene (1995); Bowers (1995); Orr (1992); Gablik (1991) and Snowber (1999) are to come to pass. As Purpel (1999) observes, "The great bulk of formal educational policies and practices reflect and facilitate structured inequality, rationed dignity, rationalized privilege, and self righteous hierarchy" (p.59). In the quest for a "pedagogy of transformation and meaning" (p.59), gardens provide a model for spiritual resolution.

As with gardens, curriculum and curriculum inquiry for the spirit creates a space for the soulful nature of humankind. We are struggling to find our breath in a world which suffocates beneath the pressing domination of empirical, technological, and economic paradigms. We feel disconnected by the whirl of the world, overwhelmed by the barrage of global economics, divorced from friends and family, and worse - from ourselves.

According to Gablik (1991):

The psychic and social structures in which we live have become too profoundly anti-ecological, unhealthy and destructive. There is a need for new forms emphasizing our essential interconnectedness rather than our separateness, forms evoking the feeling of belonging to a larger whole rather than expressing the isolated, alienated self. (p.5-6)

Like street children who are preyed upon by pushers, pimps and pedophiles, our alienation has left us vulnerable. The modern demons of consumerism, of apathy, and of indifference seek our discipleship. We have learned to tolerate bloodshed, material lust, and the destruction of our earth, because our fragmented educational environments muffle our responsibility for the perpetuation of these horrors. According to Orr (1992):

To see things in their wholeness is politically threatening. To understand that our manner of living, so comfortable for some, is linked to cancer rates in migrant laborers in California, the disappearance of tropical rain forests, 50,000 toxic dumps across the USA, and the depletion of the ozone layer is to see the need for a change in our way of life. (p.88)

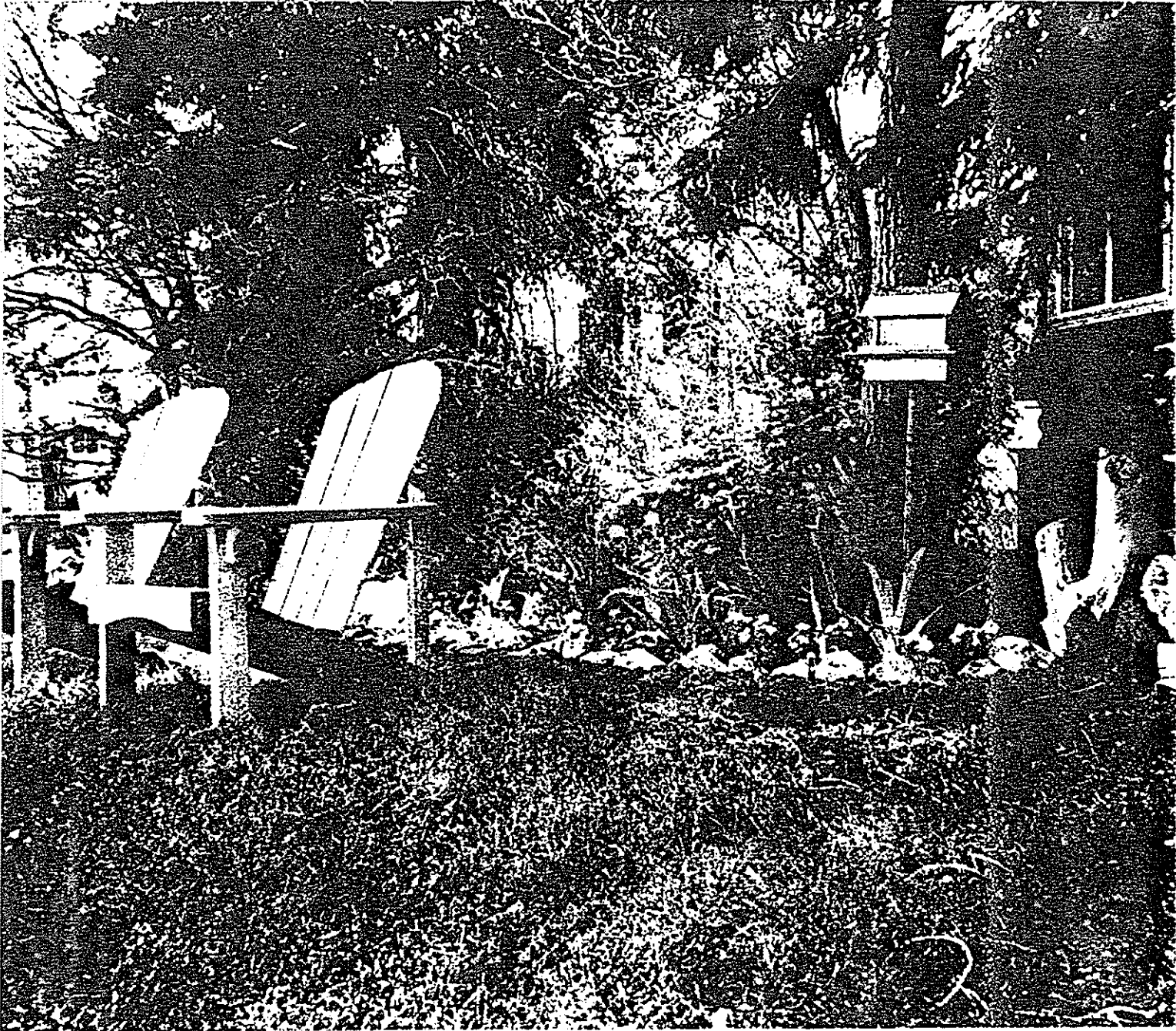


Figure 20

Iris garden, Whytewold, Manitoba, July 2001

Our conduct in this place and time has consequences. We need time to pause, to learn to connect our dreams, our desires, and our destructive actions to the effects we reap upon lived and natural worlds. Yet contemporary life leaves little opportunity for contemplating such connections. Snowber (1999) observes, "As one attends to the physicality of daily life, one begins to see the sacredness in the ordinary" (p.23). I recall several years ago describing the activities of my niece and nephew to my grandmother. She wondered when they had time to play. In contrast, I recall my own childhood, playing by the river, exploring the nearby urban forest, never coming home until the streetlights came on. I read books, joined other children for spontaneous games at the community centre, and became bored! Now children seem to echo the accelerated life that adults lead, and with life-worlds filled with electronic objects, cell-phones, computers, and televisions, they need never fill the gaps between appointments with imaginative activities. But it is within the silences of our lives that we find the time and place to connect with ourselves, our imagination, and our spirituality. Gardens provide intervals for reflection. Could this be a goal for curriculum and curriculum inquiry as well?

July 7, 2001

And so, we come to this last month in a very tight schedule for writing and researching; for reflecting and for making gardens. I feel terrified, tired, and doomed. Is this the way I always feel at this stage of an inquiry? I dive in, knowing and trusting that the only way to conquer such anxieties is to enter the creative process in a disciplined, dogged way. Choose a place to begin; no, better, just begin - begin from anywhere. Move from malaise and fear to feelings of gratitude and hope. Yet I hover, I hover between worlds, on the cusp of opportunity, or the threshold of collapse - oh the next few weeks will tell. Does my destiny whirl in clouds of chaos?

The way is unclear. Are there machinations afoot that I cannot read or am I just pulling back in panic, so close to the trail I seek? Am I afraid to tread upon the promised

path? I quell the urge to flee. Is this a theme to my life - to reach for the fire, but pull back when the flame is hot?

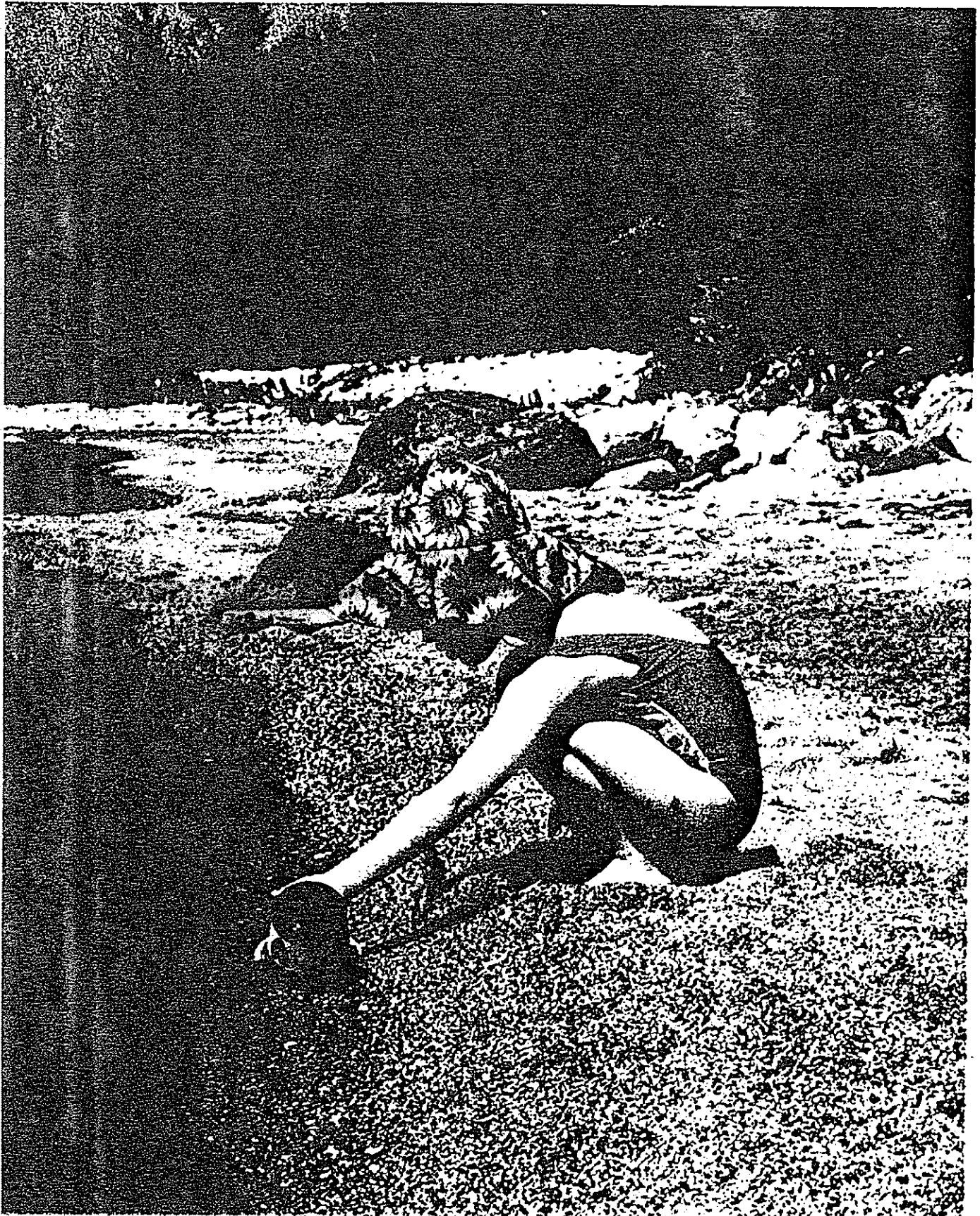
Center - breathe - fall back - sink into memories of experiences that bring comfort - nature, physicality, creativity. Breathe.

July, the month of endless blue sky, of gin and tonics, summer days, children's play, releases the constraints of the work-a-day. I woke today to a morning warm with the promise of summer. Recall the endless summers of childhood. Life was so simple then, reading comics in cottage bunks, wandering the gravel roads late at night, the smell of heat captured in the coating of warm tar, the tinkles of laughter rising from rings of patio lanterns.

What a month to "knuckle down". It's almost a crime against nature, this trespass upon a precious prairie summer! I feel that I have done this for years, that maybe I have done this too many years.

Regain my rhythm. Seek harmony, not control. I seek a mental equivalent to the sensation of flow. I open a book at random - John Caputo's Radical Hermeneutics. He speaks of "openness to the mystery" and it reminds me of submitting to the rhythm of summer. This is a fine place to begin a foray into the nature of the spirit. I think of the resistance of body during the beginning of a run, tight muscles reluctant to move. I must resuscitate my mind, using thought to shift the body into a synchronized rhythm of breathing. I remember the ability to run for hours, the flow of mind and body that allows one to accomplish such a task. This sensation is not unlike the act of writing: risk taking, resistance and submission, sinking into the rhythm of creativity.

Keep at the movement, breathe into the body and the mind, openness to the journey, to the mystery. The sensation of water is a memory site of spirit - "water well when water is needed". Magic places. Remembering this sensation brings forth the memories of those dream-like days of summer childhood. Sky and lake and memory merge - oh endless days of sunshine - embodied celebration!



I recall a day on the golf course when I achieved synesthesia - the chorus of mind, body, spirit; of terrain, equipment, and technique. I swung and felt, for a brief moment - perfection, placing the ball exactly where I sighted it upon the green. That is what brings us back to experience. These moments of flight. We cannot force these moments upon ourselves, or upon others. We struggle, we seek, we fight and cry, we throw hands up in anger or frustration, we walk away from the task. Yet sometimes all the constituents fall into place, like bodies afloat in the temperate waters of summer.

Swim into the place where setting sun meets water. The temperature of the lake is so close to body temperature that it feels like flying. Weightlessness - a thin covering of flesh separates the water of my being from the elements of the lake.

4.2 Spiritual Encounters with Community, with Place and with Nature

July 13, 2001

What I like about the lake. I like the cottage because you can swim right in the front yard. The beach is so close you can walk to it. I love the piers. The sound of the waves is so peaceful at night. I wouldn't live here because you are right on a highway - too busy. I love going for walks on the beach; the sand feels cool on your toes.

What I don't like about the lake. There's not much, only that there's too much spiders.

Love Jessie

Dear Karen E.

We had a wonderful time. I had a wonderful time at the beach. And I loved to swim right outside the cottage and I love standing on the big rocks.

P.S. I wrote this, Jessie

Love Ian

How is it that one comes to comprehend the spirit of place? A field guide can provide a taxonomic identification of the plants, the animals, and the insects which inhabit a

place, but information such as this fails to describe the multitude of connections that are necessary for survival. For example, many of Manitoba's native orchids require a certain companion fungus present in the soil in order to reproduce. Some insects or animals are prey, some are hunters; communities are formed by a web of relationships. I've noticed that when I peel the forest tent cocoons off my cottage, my plants, my mailbox, and my outdoor furniture, there is a little fat-bodied spider nestled beneath each cocoon. Lloyd has observed the spiders devouring the emerging moths.

We can also study the history of a place. On one of my walks about the Whytewold community I noticed that a consortium of citizens are restoring one of the general stores that once peppered the area. A friend visiting from Calgary remembered that as a child she frequented this store, purchasing licorice "pipes", popsicles, and penny candy from the proprietors of the store, whom she recalled by name. The historical society is seeking stories such as hers so that they can produce an oral as well as a visual interpretation of this place. Accordingly, Lippard (1997) observes, "local historical societies are apt to be a better reflection of the ordinary lives lived around them..." (p.91). I am fascinated that someone is actually interested in this odd little building, but I recall what an important childhood destination these emporiums once were. Their frequency in the beach communities reflect days when mothers and children spent summers at the lake, camping in little cottages with tiny refrigerators and outdoor plumbing - summers of simple routines.

Knowledge of the geology of a place also contributes to our understanding of place. I know for example that this locale was once a part of a huge glacial formation known as Lake Agassiz. What is now the third largest lake in Canada was once significantly larger, covering most of southern Manitoba (Russell, 2000). I love finding the fossil fragments of sea creatures upon the beach. They lived in the seas of the Devonian geological era, the age of fishes. I marvel that I can pocket the remnants of a creature which lived some 500 million years ago.

A place like this inspires passion in many of its residents, past and present, permanent and seasonal. Winnipeg Free Press reporter Val Werier often writes about the natural and sociological features of Lake Winnipeg. The fellow who cut my trees paints portraits of the lake. Author David Arnason spins prairie yarns from his Willow Island cottage. Reporter Christopher Dafoe comes here from Vancouver each summer, returning to his family cottage in Ponemah, just north of where I write today. Dafoe's family has been coming here since 1911. In this passage he imagines his grandparents arriving in this place for the first time:

My grandparents in their Sunday best take the CPR train north from Winnipeg to get their first look at Ponemah Beach, named for the 'land of the hereafter', in Longfellow's Hiawatha. They alight at the small community of Matlock near the south end of Lake Winnipeg and, turning their faces once more to the north, begin to walk along the shore, around large rocks and through cool thickets of willow. There are a few cottages here along the low bank above the shallow lake, simple wooden boxes with steep roofs and screened verandahs, but for much of the hazy space between where they stand and the distant green blur of Dunottar Point, three miles away as the gull flies, the shoreline is thick with trees. My grandmother names them: poplars and cottonwoods, mostly, but with a few large and ancient oaks and a dim green and yellow border of marsh willow. (Dafoe, 2000, p.13-14)

How long does it take to know a place, to belong to a locale? I first visited Whytewold as a child. My family rented a place on Clairmont, just south of where I am now. I remember little of the cottage, but when I was a teenager I dreamed that I was walking by the red and white yard swing, and on down the lane to the cottage where my aunts were staying. My parents woke me just as I exited the rear gate of our yard on Manchester Boulevard.

I have returned once more to Whytewold. How is it that I come to know that I am "home"? Why is this the place I have chosen to weave myself into? In Barbara

Kingsolver's powerful novel The Poisonwood Bible, American evangelist Nathan Price takes his wife and four daughters to the heart of central Africa during a time of great political upheaval. As the Preacher Price tries to win the villagers of Kilanga to the Baptist faith, his wife and daughters become woven into the life of the Congo. They are marked forever by place. Hear the words of Orleana Price, as she reflects on her experiences in Africa and the loss of her daughter Ruth May:

The Congo River, being of a different temperament, drowned most of its conquerors outright. In Congo a slashed jungle quickly becomes a field of flowers, and scars become the ornaments of a particular face. Call it oppression, complicity, stupefaction, call it what you like, it doesn't matter. Africa swallowed the conqueror's music and sang a new song of her own.

If you are the eyes in the trees, watching us as we walk away from Kilanga, how will you make your judgment? Lord knows after thirty years I still crave your forgiveness, but who are you? A small burial mound in the middle of Nathan's garden, where vines and flowers have long since unrolled to feed insects and children. Is that what you are? Are you still my own flesh and blood, my last-born, or are you now the flesh of Africa? How can I tell the difference when two rivers have run together so? Try to imagine what never happened: our family without Africa, or the Africa that would have been without us. Look at your sisters now. Lock, stock, and barrel, they've got their own three ways to live with our history. Some can find it. Many more never do. But which one among us is without sin? I can hardly think where to cast my stones, so I just go on keening for my own losses, trying to wear the marks of the boot on my back as gracefully as the Congo wears hers.

My little beast, my eyes, my favorite stolen egg. Listen. To live is to be marked. To live is to change, to acquire the words of a story, and that is the only

celebration we mortals really know. In perfect stillness, frankly, I've only found sorrow. (Kingsolver, 1998, p.385)

We can be profoundly marked by place. As with the family Price, we are shaped by geographies - spiritual cartographies of the local. This epistemology of place is a crucial dimension in the construction of a terrestrial spirituality. Last year, a friend came to Whytewold with her family. They had rented a cottage just north of here for several childhood summers. During the year previous, she lost her brother to Hodgkins disease. Just as certain geographies can cause us to suffer profoundly, forever changing our life path, alternatively, place can heal and sustain us. In a recent Manitoba Gardener, former journalist Jackie Shymanski (2001) shares her story of healing. After spending several years reporting on the war in Yugoslavia, she returned to Winnipeg emotionally shattered and unable to rejoin society. "I was at a loss until a family friend nudged me in the direction of gardening. Leave your troubles at the garden gate and just work hard. Brawn instead of brains. The appeal was irresistible" (p.38). After three summers of working in Assiniboine Park's English garden, Shymanski began to recover her damaged spirit. Lippard (1997) observes:

The intersections of nature, culture, history, and ideology form the ground on which we stand - our land, our place, the local. The lure of the local is the pull of place that operates on each of us, exposing our politics and our spiritual legacies. (p.7)

As an educational premise, a geography of spirit favours the cultivation of local knowledge. As we begin to "look around", we begin to see the layers of social, of natural, and, of cultural communities which constitute the place we know. Beginning with "the place that we are", we undertake a quest of vision and of body, discovering the strata of meanings that layer these lived and natural worlds. Here Sinatra and Murphy (quoted in Sandercock, 1998) describe the Australian aboriginal notion of a vision-quest or "walk-about":

Country is underneath us all the time, but it's all covered up and we in our minds are all covered up. So when we walk through the land, we can't see anything for a while. We got all our possessions with us, and through these things we look at the land. Do you feel the sand you walk on? Are you aware of where your feet step? Are you aware of the trees you just passed, the birds that just landed? How much do you see? That has to shift and so soon as it does we get a shift in mind which drops down to feeling. Then we wake up to feeling, what we call *le-an* here, and we become more alive, we start feeling, we become more sensitive. You start to read the country. ... See, you are that land, and that land is you. ... You wake up, and you see a lot of things and the country starts living for you. Everything is based on that feeling *le-an*, seeing through that feeling. (p.57)

Land and self merge in a quest for meaning. Understanding emerges through interpretations of place, such as these, which acknowledge that we both shape and are shaped by natural and lived communities. According to Johnson (1987):

Meaning includes patterns of embodied experience and preconceptual structures of our sensibilities (i.e., our mode of perception, or orienting ourselves, and of interacting with other objects, events, or persons). These embodied patterns do not remain private or peculiar to the person who experiences them. Our community helps us interpret and codify many of our felt patterns. They become shared cultural modes of experience and help to determine the nature of our meaningful, coherent understanding of our "world". (p.14)

Maxine Greene (1995) also observes that learning should begin with the pursuit of local knowledge, encouraging learners to begin to look for understanding within their own schools, institutions, and neighborhoods. She writes, "Local knowledge and local coming together ought to counter the tendency toward abstraction, as should a conscious concern for the particular, the everyday, the concrete" (p.69). David Orr and David Eagan (1992) suggest that programs of study could be focused on place, and have developed a

curriculum of environmental responsibility which utilizes the locale of the university. Further, Orr (1992) has explicated four critical reasons to include the local in education: place stimulates the development of intellect through experience; place downplays the isolation of overspecialization by promoting inter-disciplinary diversity and connectivity in thought and action; place reeducates “people in the art of living well where they are” inspiring care and concern for local cultural and natural communities; and finally knowledge of place and knowledge of self are intimately intertwined (p.129-130). Orr is concerned with the creation of empowered “inhabitants”, residents of place who are concerned enough about their communities to take action. This idea of citizen praxis is a view he shares with Paulo Freire (1970), Ivan Illich (1971) and Wendell Berry (2001). While Freire seeks to emancipate an institutionalized oppressed citizenry, Illich seeks to de-institutionalize culture and society. Writing in 1971, he expresses his fears that the institutionalization of society will lead to “physical pollution, social polarization, and psychological impotence: three dimensions in a process of global degradation and modernized misery” (p.1). Berry (2001) defines a counter measure to Illich's depowered society by developing a plan for locally sensitive economies. He also observes that our current consumer practices and land use methodologies are accelerating in destructiveness as our inability to revision sustainable cultural practices leads to more and more socially, culturally, and ecologically ruinous practices.

For Griffin (1988) a postmodern definition of spirituality is deeply woven into place and community. He states, “Postmodern thought is communal or communitarian, stressing that social policy should be directed toward the preservation and re-creation of various forms of local community” (p.18). Lippard (1997) observes, “A sense of place is a virtual immersion that depends on lived experience and a topographical intimacy that is rare today both in ordinary life and in traditional educational fields” (p.33). Dewey (cited in Ezrahi, 1997) states, “If we see that knowing is not the act of an outside spectator, but of a participator inside the natural and social scene, then the true object of knowledge resides in

the consequences of directed action” (p.318). Our spiritual well-being is defined by place. It is essential that learning institutions include the worlds right outside our windows, the places in which we live.

I fear for those who undergo learning experiences that isolate and divorce them from place. I recall a conversation with an instructor in the International Baccalaureate program in one of my first graduate classes. Although I was very uncertain as to where I stood on a number of educational issues, all my pedagogical alarm bells went off when I discovered that the "I.B." program featured a program of study which is entirely based on American content. The instructor saw no problem with providing such a "canned" curriculum to Canadian students. Alternatively, Patrick Slattery's curriculum inquiry course is designed to be locally sensitive, and provides "excursions outside the road map of the everyday" (Higgins & Wilson Baptist, 2000). This encourages learners to create new cartographies of familiar places. I am also excited about the possibilities of a program called "Landscapes for Learning", where schoolyards are turned into ecological learning laboratories. Vast expanses of grass and barren asphalt playgrounds can be converted into interactive gardens, play spaces, and green classrooms. These landscapes can be used for studying science, art, and music, for developing visual and physical abilities, and for connecting and communing with nature. As today's children appear to spend more and more time in structured activities, perhaps these eco-classrooms could provide opportunities to develop a kinship with place.

Without exposure to a range of activities in the natural world, children's play and learning experiences are restricted. Interaction with plant and animal materials such as smooth stones, rough bark, wet fur, fuzzy leaves and soft feathers provide sensory experiences different from those offered by a manufactured tricycle or metal slide. People-built elements are a part of our culture and represent ways that humans solve complex problems. To learn about, to value, and to ultimately protect

their world, children need to experience it fully in both its natural and built forms, where process is interwoven with product. (Stine, 1997, p.33)

Landscapes for learning reconceptualizes the place of knowledge acquisition and inspires innovative interpretations of curriculum. This notion embodies Wen-Song Hwu's (1998) invitation for inquirers to "think differently". Hwu observes that:

We live on a threshold of cultural change, at a time when traditions are called into question and new alternatives are, or are yet to become, uncertain themselves. What we can do is to find creative and moving ways to re-describe ourselves and the world. (p.30)

A pedagogy of place allows us to begin to redescribe the world by highlighting that which lies beneath our feet. To combat our cultural tendency toward the banal, the mundane, and the anti-aesthetic, we must evoke a new way of seeing which unites our spirit with the place where we live.

Last year in my materials course I asked my students to make a materials board based on the "place that they came from", a board which characterized "home". The assignment was to create a materials board which demonstrated that materials could speak of a particular locale; the challenge was to create the board using non-traditional materials. The results were astounding. One woman, who is just beginning to explore her Jewish roots, created a "board" from a jar, layering rocks, straws, and poetry within. She called it a "gestalt of experience". Another student who grew up in a new suburb made a "board" from wheat, iron, glass, and stone, which for him evoked memories of living on the margins between city and prairie.

I admit that by good fortune rather than good planning, I assigned the project the week before Thanksgiving. This meant that the students who came from rural locations went home for the holiday. Some of the most powerful pieces came from these students. One skillfully merged a barnyard soiled disk of corrugated steel with barbed wire, heavy fabric, a rusted mower blade and ceramic tile. Another layered shingles, nails, feathers,

sharp stones, and sticks. When she spoke about the project, she contrasted the gentler aspects of farm living - open fields and skies, pigeons cooing in the warm sun-dotted hay loft - with the very real dangers of rural life. Another student placed prairie grasses inside a copy of W.O. Mitchell's Who Has Seen the Wind?, marking off her favourite passages. Her project included a letter in which she described a journey across the prairies from Saskatoon to Winnipeg. When she moved here to attend university, she deliberately chose to arrive by train, knowing that the slower mode of transportation would allow her to contemplate the changes in landscape and life. Some students were unable to travel home, and so they looked for local materials that could represent the place that they left behind. Heavy bark from the river forest stood in as substitute for the aspen of the Alberta foothills for one student, and gray paving stone for the craggy shield terrain of Thunder Bay for another. But the most powerful souvenir of this assignment was the strong emotions that it evoked. One student confessed that the project made him feel homesick, and the others echoed his sadness. This proved to be a powerful lesson in the language of materials and the spirit of place.

I worry about the places in which contemporary children are growing up. I once drove from the south end of my city to a site in the northwest end of town. For what seemed to be an endless amount of time, I passed through neighborhoods with burnt and boarded up homes. I was astounded by the breadth of urban erosion. I also recently visited one of Winnipeg's newer suburbs. Whereas the original homes of Lindenwoods were postmodern pastiches of Tudor homes, castles, and the like, the newest versions are parodies of the original pastiches - simulacra - interpretations of imitations. Compressed on lots only marginally larger than the two thousand square foot homes, each features a two-car garage as a welcoming feature. The front entryways are squeezed in behind the garage and feature abbreviated columns; one complements the barely visible entryway, the other ends abruptly on the garage roof. A confusing clash of angles composes the roof line with tiny lengths of eavestroughing garnishing each profile. I could not help thinking that these

were abbreviated houses situated in abbreviated neighborhoods. There are few public sidewalks, no services, nowhere to walk to. Green spaces consist of long sprawling stretches of featureless grass ringing empty retention ponds posted with "keep away" signs. Here, unlike in the streets of Winnipeg's core, the streets are devoid of people. This is a neighborhood designed for cars, not people.

What kind of materials would a future design student use to describe these places? Stucco, glass, concrete? Or will the children growing up today be unable to develop the intimacy required to characterize "home", now that they spend less and less time "living" in the places where they dwell? A colleague recently visited the new suburbs ringing the galloping megalopolis of Calgary, and reported that some of these bright new communities lack schools (C. Thomsen, personal communication, July 20, 2001). What then will become the nucleus of such a community? Perhaps these places will have a mobile center, a vehicular heart. The places of childhood now roll on by, viewed through panes of auto-glass. Ah, but wait, now children need not even gaze out the car windows anymore, for mini-vans can be equipped with televisions. Is this the spirit of the new age, an endless communion of eye and screen? Be warned, for as Mumford observes, "A community that does not plan and build the necessary structures for the common life will remain under a perpetual weight and handicap: its buildings may tower against the skies, but its actual social stature may be smaller measured by effective accomplishment than a decent country town" (p.471).

Some believe that urban sprawl is one of the most insidious plagues of western society. City centres with established hospitals, schools, services and public transportation rapidly decay, while parasitic housing developments devour prime agricultural land. In the United States urban sprawl displaces 1.2 million acres of farmland a year. Add forest and undeveloped land at approximately 8 million acres annually, and you have a yearly loss of two million acres (Mitchell, 2001, p.58). I also grew up in a suburb, one built in the 1950's during a postwar housing boom, on the fringes of a planned community called

Wildwood Park. In this place, all the houses face a central green space, while back alleys provide access for vehicles and services. The community is not overly large so walking to nearby public transportation is not onerous. This was a wonderful place in which to grow up; the houses were affordable, and so the inhabitants were as diverse as a 1960's Canadian suburb might be. We could and did walk everywhere - to shopping, to community centres, and to school. The park featured four or five public play areas, mature trees, and a variety of housing styles, some quite mundane, and others architecturally innovative. Wildwood Park and the suburb of Fort Garry are serviced by a rather unsightly street known as the Pembina strip. While the "strip" has always been an eyesore, recently I have seen some of the negative effects of urbanization creep down the roadway. Several banks have closed; small corner groceterias have disappeared. I have noticed graffiti appearing on the buildings and homeless people strolling the street. The lumber and hardware stores have closed or metamorphosed into big-box retail outlets, migrating to "megamalls" beyond the reach of those who lack a car.

Orr (1992) observes, "We have become comfortable with all kinds of ugliness and seem incapable of effective protest against its purveyors" (p.88). How does one rationalize our society's obsession with banality, with ugliness, and unsustainable consumption? I am reminded of Hannibal Lecter's instructions to the young detective, Clarice Starling, on how to locate the serial killer in director Jonathan Demme's chilling 1987 film, The Silence of Lambs:

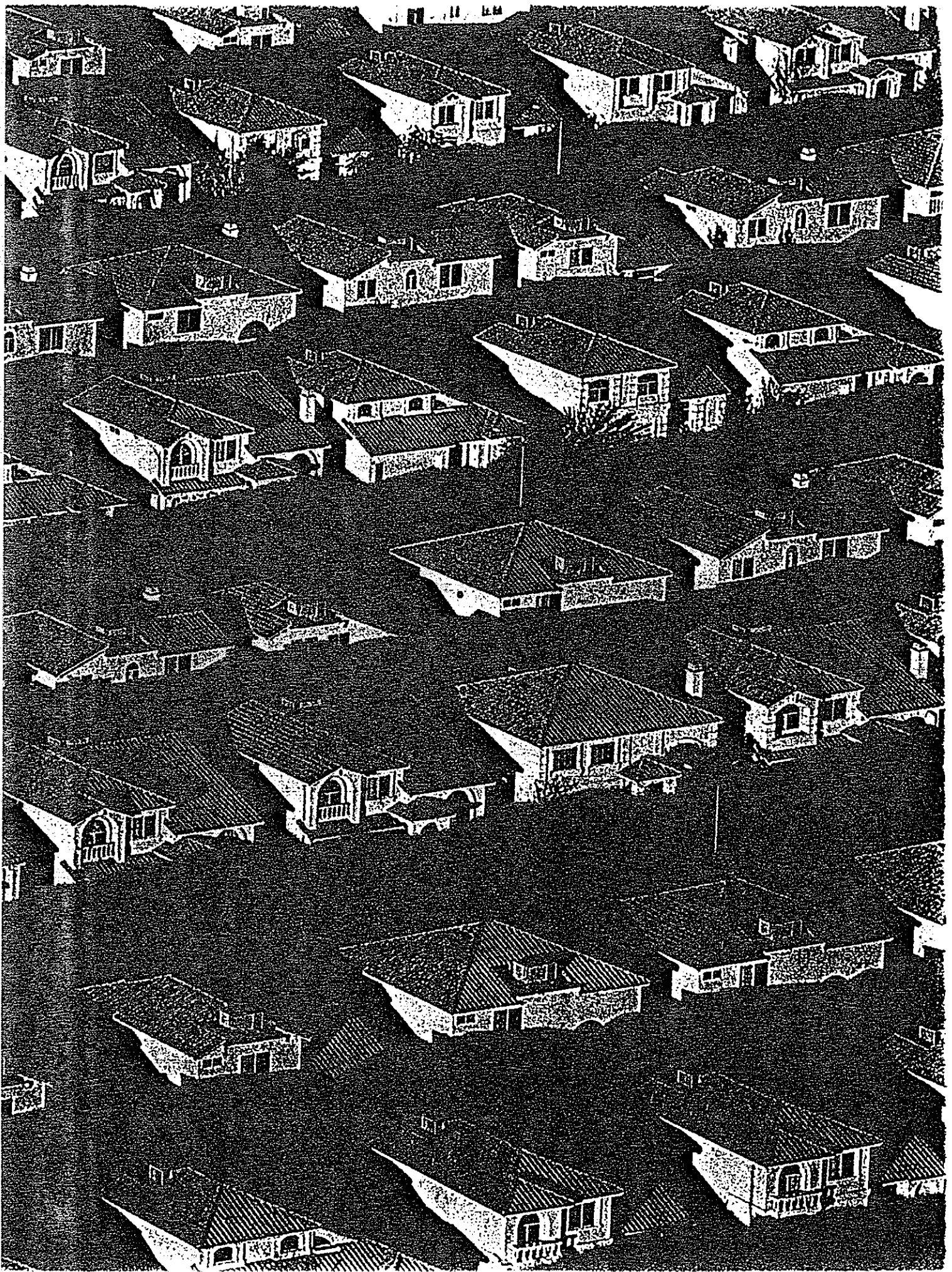
Lecter: No! He covets. That is his nature. And how do we begin to covet, Clarice?

Do we seek out things to covet? Make an effort to answer now.

Clarice: No. We just ...

Lecter: No. We begin by coveting what we see every day. Don't you feel eyes moving over your body, Clarice? And don't your eyes seek out the things you want?

(Demme, 1991)



If we are so complacent in our desire, as visually submissive as Lector proposes, then how can we shift our vision to sustainable, soulful means of creating and sustaining communities? Alexander, Ishikawa and Silverstein (1977) suggest that we begin to understand lived worlds through a "patterned language", a means of understanding how the constructs of culture and nature exist as endlessly connecting patterns, much like the concentric ripples caused by drops of rain upon a body of water. These patterns are fractal in nature; patterns are embedded in other patterns - circling webs of connectivity:

This is a fundamental view of the world. It says that when you build a thing you cannot merely build that thing in isolation, but must also repair the world around it, and within it, so that the larger world at that one place becomes more coherent, and more whole; and the thing which you make takes its place in the web of nature, as you make it. (p.xiii)

Contemporary curriculum theorists believe that educators can foster positive change through curriculum inquiry which embraces a connective spiritual order. According to Hwu (1998), "Breaking away from the traditional order constitutes an act of self-exile, a stage that allows the soul's own explanation, a journey, an open-ended one that defines, connects, and disconnects, that leads to possible transformations" (p.32). C.A. Bowers (1995) highlights a hidden curriculum of destructive cultural and ecological practices within schooling, which sustains a pedagogical paradigm of consumption, greed, and eco-fragmentation.

I have been arguing that the beliefs and values associated with modern consciousness have been framed in terms of anthropocentric metanarratives - narratives that treat the environment as an exploitable resource, and that key elements of this form of consciousness are communicated through the curriculum as the taken for granted reality. (p.315)

Bowers poses a series of questions for educators to ask of themselves, questions that he believes could help determine future cultural practices.

What is the image of the individual that is represented in the curriculum, and how is success understood?

What is represented as the central activities in people's lives?

What forms of knowledge are represented as important, and what is the basis of their authority?

How is the community represented?

What human relationships are emphasized?

How is tradition understood, and what forms of tradition are given special visibility?

How are humans viewed in relationship to the natural environment?

What is the role assigned to science and technology, and are they treated as synonymous with social progress?

What are represented as the limits that humans face?

Is the individuals' sense of responsibility represented as extending beyond self to include past and future generations?

(p.315-316)

It is essential that we learn to curb our destructive social and environmental practices. French (2000) reports that biologists are warning that current cultural practices will result in the destruction of one-fifth of all earthly plant and animal species within the next 30 years. Weston (1999) wonders if it is too late to reverse the damage we do to ourselves, to other cultures, and to nature. He reminds us that arresting destruction begins at home, in the local, observing that:

Who we really need to "save" is us.... It is our task, now, coming into some sort of ecological awareness, to learn to live in accord with that awareness, to learn to live as co-inhabitants of this planet. We need to learn what might best be called a certain kind of etiquette.... Watch the spiders. Watch the skies. Walk. Garden. Let the lawn go wild. Feed the birds. Learn the birds. Talk to the animals. Seek out the

stories of your place, pay attention to the names. This is the “etiquette” I mean: not claiming all the space for ourselves, learning to listen, learning how to invite the larger world, other presences, to re-enter our lives. (p.57)

Lopez (in Orr, 1992) states, “The interior landscape responds to the character and subtlety of an exterior landscape; the shape of the individual’s mind is affected by land as it is by genes” (p.86). When we attend to the spirit of our own place, we begin to understand how our practices, destructive or sustainable, ripple through the fabric of the lived and natural world. According to Canadian artist and activist Bruce Cockburn (2001):

To thrive, society needs a sense that we're looking out for each other, needs to know where it came from and what sacrifices were made to create it.... We have to stop the hemorrhaging in health care and education, the shrinking of environmental safeguards. ... My job is to try and trap the spirit of things in the scratches of pen on paper, in the pulling of notes out of metal. These become songs and the songs become fuel. They can be fuel for romance, for protest, for spiritual discovery, or for complacency. That is where you all come in. You decide how a song will be heard and felt. (p.2)

Songs of life, circles of connectivity, webs of meaning; we are capable of “thinking differently”, of acting differently; and our ability to do so will determine the fate of the planet.

Mother, be still, listen. I can see you leading your children to the water, and you call it a story of ruin. Here is what I see: First, the forest. Trees like muscular animals overgrown beyond all reason. Vines strangling their kin in the wrestle for sunlight. The glide of snake belly on branch. A choir of seedlings arching their necks out of rotted tree stumps, sucking life out of death. I am the forest’s conscience, but remember the forest eats itself and lives forever.

Away down below single file on the path comes a woman with four girls, the pale doomed blossoms. The mother leads them on, blue-eyed, waving a hand in

front of her to part the curtain of spiders' webs. She appears to be conducting a symphony. Behind her back the smallest child pauses to break off the tip of every branch she can reach. She likes the stinging green scent released by the broken leaves. As she reaches to snatch a leaf she spies a plump, orange-bodied spider that has been knocked to the ground. The spider is on its back and fatly vulnerable, struggling to find its pointed feet and scurry back into the air. The child delicately reaches out her toe and squashes the spider. Its dark blood squirts sideways, alarmingly. The child runs to catch up.

At the river they eat their picnic lunch then move downstream to shriek in the cool water. The noise they make frightens away a young okapi. He had just lately begun to inhabit this territory on the edge of the village. If the children had not come today, the okapi would have chosen this as his place. He would have remained until the second month of the dry season, and then a hunter would have killed him. But instead he is startled today by the picnic, and his cautious instincts drive him deeper into the jungle, where he finds a mate and lives through the year. All because. If the mother and her children had not come down the path on this day, the pinched tree branches would have grown larger and the fat-bodied spider would have lived. Every life is different because you passed this way and touched history. Even the child Ruth May touched history. Everyone is complicit. The okapi complied by living, and the spider by dying. It would have lived if it could.

(Kingsolver, 1998, p.538)

July 13, 2001

I loved the peace, although the sound of the waves made me nervous the first night when I sat out listening to them as the kids were sleeping. I loved how I was able to connect with the kids. No outside pressures. It was precious time. I hope they will remember as much as I will. I enjoyed taking them to Gimli and shopping with them as a mom. I enjoyed our walks down the beach and going to the corner store for a paper. The

second night the waves lulled me into a peaceful sleep. I want to thank you and Lloyd for giving us this opportunity to connect and relax.

Love Glennda

P.S. I agree, too many spiders!

Chapter 5 • The Stones of Time

Each time that I create a new garden at Whytefold, I erect a stone sculpture in celebration, and as a means of signifying my contract of caring with the earth. I must be a curious sight, rooting about in the rip-rap which lines the lakefront at my cottage, seeking the perfect slab of granite or limestone boulder with which to mark the garden. Then legs bent to the burden, I stagger up the boulders with a large stone in my arms, placing it precisely in the landscape.

Stones hold deep meanings for the Inuit people. The *inuksuit* that they build upon the northern landscape provide navigational aids, mark good hunting and fishing grounds, and indicate places of spiritual signification. In the Canadian shield, forest-dwellers once created petroglyphs which described the animal spirit of this land of rocks, forests, and lakes - turtles, eagles, beavers, and the like. Cheney (1999) observes that for indigenous people, rocks signify the oldest and wisest of all earth-based beings.

In this, rocks, in their enduring presence, their watchfulness, maybe our first and most profound teachers of the most fundamental aspects of our moral presence in and to this world: Mindfulness and universal consideration, universal invitation into the reciprocities of knowledge and care. (p.145)

On beach walks, Lloyd and I search for driftwood and found objects to add to the garden. Lloyd found a piece of twisted, beach-battered copper tinted by sun, wind, and water. I married it to a wooden stump and two large granite pieces, a gift for the iris garden. We dragged a beautiful piece of driftwood with pieces of quartz and limestone embedded in the wood all the way back from a distant northern beach. It marks the corner of the bush-to-be. We are constantly looking for things to add to the garden, and we are often inspired by the discoveries we make. When contractors discovered a curious wood and metal object beneath the cottage, we began to search the beaches for orbs of speckled stone to place in this nest-like form for the "Thesis" garden. My sister and her children

painted stones and placed them in the garden during their vacation. Other friends and family have also contributed.

In the garden, mindfulness has been rewarded. A damaged landscape starts to change form. History still anchors this site, but new narratives begin to alter the settings that others created. A fresh vision has taken residence and the land responds with abundant growth. I once asked if mindfulness requires constant vision. The answer is yes. Maintaining constant vision becomes a state of being, an "openness to mystery", a state of "wide awakefulness" which rewards the bearer with the ability to see the world as a place of new possibilities. Add physicality to mind, and the action of digging a hole, of planting a seed, of transforming pieces of flotsam and jetsam, evolves into acts of discovery, of play, and of wonder, for myself and for others who come to this garden. Push further, submit to the interplay of mind and body, and step into the flow of spirit.

It is now nearing the end of July, and the garden is thriving. The new shrubs have taken well to the soil, and the impatiens seem to be adapting to the eastern exposure. The Gerber daisy which I brought to my thesis proposal defense has blossomed - two big bright orange flowers. Gardens do not end. One can drive by an old homestead on the prairie and still see the remnants of gardens - a lilac bush, a wizened apple tree, a purple iris buried in a sea of grass. In the yard at Whytewold, I discovered tiny irises, violets and delphiniums barely visible in a sea of fire moss, and I transplanted them to the new garden. They are adjusting well.

There is still much to do for this garden. I plan a sitting area, some saskatoon and raspberry bushes alongside a deck or patio, some juniper bushes. I hope to encourage some grass to grow in the soil which I will enrich with this year's leaves and kitchen waste when it becomes compost next year. Gardens are ongoing, as are stories, and conversations, and research. Gardens do not end, but this inquiry must.

This inquiry, the garden and the researcher have evolved together, each wrapped into each other, growing and changing, altering landscapes of earth and mind. As a

document which is phenomenological, hermeneutic and artistic-aesthetic in nature, this blending, winding, and weaving of observations, reflections, and actions is only appropriate. According to Green (1978):

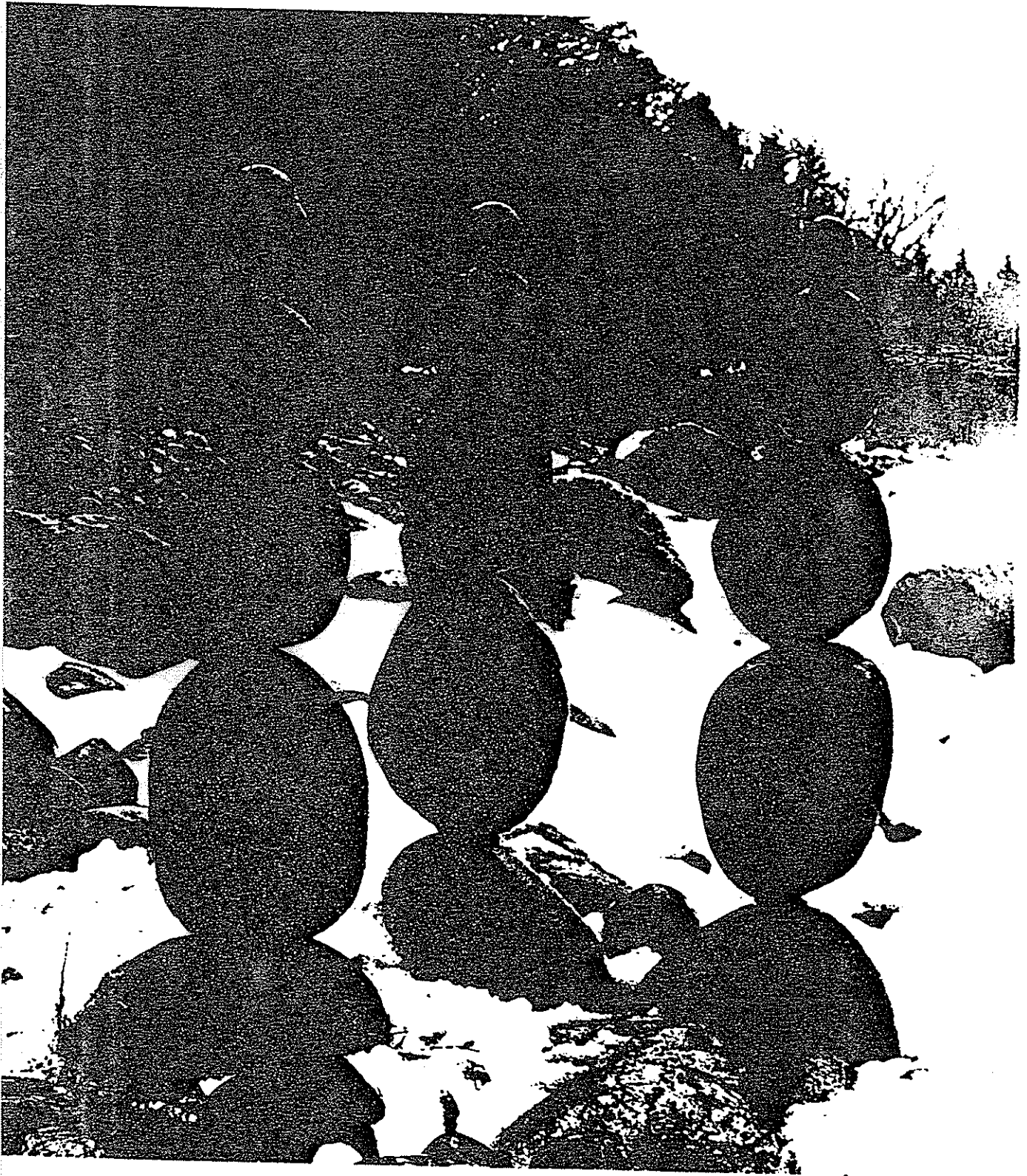
Aesthetic experiences, as I have suggested, involve us as existing beings in pursuit of meanings. They involve us as historical beings born into social reality. They must, therefore, be lived within the context of our own self-understanding, within the context of what we have constituted as our world. (p.180)

This is my story. "Every landscape is a hermetic narrative", states Lippard (1997), "Finding a fitting place for oneself in the world is finding a place for oneself in a story" (p.33). I have "placed" myself deeply in this inquiry of gardens and of curriculum, but I hope that there is a place for you, the reader. This is how a garden continues, how an inquiry remains alive - in a circle of interpretations, a fluid relationship between maker and observer. This is the nature of experience, the fusion of mind, body, and of spirit. In the words of John Dewey (1934):

The experience, like that of watching a storm reach its height and gradually subside, is one of continuous movement of subject-matters. Like the ocean in the storm, there are a series of waves; suggestions reaching out and being broken in a clash, or being carried onward by a cooperative wave. If a conclusion is reached, it is that of a movement of anticipation and cumulation, one that finally comes to completion. A "conclusion" is no separate and independent thing; it is the consummation of a movement. (p.38)

July 22, 2001

Last night I dreamed of stones. I dreamed that the waters of the lake had receded, exposing all the rocks which lay beneath the water in front of my cottage. I worked amongst the boulders, bare-handed and sure-footed, creating swirling petroforms upon the lake bed. In my mind's eye I can see the patterns rising in the rocks - limestone circles, animal forms, riverways of granite winding through the stonescape. The rising sun illuminates the few remaining shallow pools of water. Red and green-gold fire on water. Pale gray patterns - cartographies of stone upon stone - whirling towards a distant horizon.



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