

## **Auto-choreography**

### **Animating Sentient Archives**

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Life itself is as much a long walk as it is a long conversation, and the ways along which we walk are those along which we live. There are beginnings and endings, of course. But every moment of beginning is itself in the midst of things and must, for that reason, be also a moment of ending in relation to whatever went before. Likewise, every step faces both ways: it is both beginning and end, or tip of a trail that leads back through our past life, and a new beginning that moves us forward towards future destinations unknown.

Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst, *Ways of Walking*<sup>1</sup>

In the distance a huge man with a heavy gait lumbers toward me. His work boots pound the dry sand above the high-tide mark. I have never seen him on the beach before, but know him as a welder who works in the industrial area in town. Walking on the beach everyday you learn who the regulars are, who makes the odd appearance and those who are new faces. I walk here everyday for pleasure and as a part of my fieldwork.<sup>2</sup> Under the rubric of belonging and the methodological imperative of paying attention, I am interested in the possibilities of learning, via place-centred perspectives, a transformative pedagogy for cultural and ecological literacy.<sup>3</sup> The focal point of this stretch of foreshore is at the intersection of two

beaches, a rocky outcrop of interconnected tidal pools known as Witches because of the resemblance to a witches hat. There are numerous shore birds present in this study, along with a whole range of actors and subjects, material, human and non-human. In recent times I have been paying particular attention to kingfishers and fairy wrens which are common to the foreshore here. There is a large parcel of wetland backing the beach, providing a significant habitat for birds, among other animals. Earlier in the morning, I spotted a pair of kingfishers on some driftwood on the beach, and begun to think about their nesting habits, 'kik-kik-kik-kik'<sup>4</sup>

The old fellow and I draw nearer together. He is still in work clothes of grease-stained black singlet and black stubbies. Grime smears from his bald head into pepper-grey hair, which also rugs his back. Despite the obvious toll that the aerobic exercise of walking is exacting upon him, he resolutely sucks on a roll-your-own cigarette, which rests hands-free in the corner of his mouth. I think to myself that I would love to take a photo of this guy trundling along, completely wrenched out of the context of his fusty workplace. Smoke wafts with the rhythm of the wind, his breath and the dogged movement forward. He grunts as we pass each other in the blur of a shared nod. Upwind, the smell of tobacco nudges me now and again as we go our separate ways. After a while I double back and walk up the beach track. Rounding the bend, I break the solitude of his quiet reverie. I apologise profusely, assuring him I had not snuck up on him on purpose. At this he motions toward the bush declaring emphatically: 'What a bloody mess!'

He rests on the treated pine fence for support. Drawing heavily on his smoke before leaning forward, he looks back over his shoulder and then swings back around to fix his gaze on me. 'Bloody greenies,' he says, 'the whole thing is fucked'. 'What do you mean?' I ask. 'Old Mrs Dunn used to live right here,' he points to two huge pine trees. 'She planted those trees and her place stood right there. Tommy Dunn's old lady, they lived here for years, kept the whole thing neat tidy, grew vegetables and had a chook shed, back over there.' He points. 'Back down there,' motioning like a conductor, 'Tommy had an old Chevy engine rigged up to haul shell grit off the beach. They would sell it in bags, cause in them days, he says, everyone had their own chooks and veggie gardens. People would come here to buy shell grit. They had a good size house, painted tip-to-toe with tar because of the termites. Soon as old Mrs Dunn died and Tommy was not around, the bloody greenies just burnt it

down. What a bloody mess,' he repeats. 'Who looks after it now?' he asks rhetorically. I pipe up, 'What about Dune-Care, the National Parks mob and the Council?' 'All fuckwits,' he says. The old fellow shakes his head and mutters as he lurches forward down the path, 'they ruined it; you can't do bloody anything, anymore.'

It is astonishing the different perceptions people hold of any particular place. I have only seen him once since then, at the post office, same outfit, in a tirade about dodgy vacuum cleaners. The area of bush the old guy is talking about covers the headland overlooking Witches and backs onto old farmland adjoining the existing village. At one end farmers still run cattle and the area contains stands of paperbark. At the northern end of this parcel of land an expanse of lake backs the dunes and then bends seaward around the corner, on occasion open to the ocean.<sup>5</sup> This is despite the damage sand-miners caused fifty years ago, all along the foreshore up and down the coast. In the dunes, up beyond the northern end, a colony of endangered little terns are nesting at the time.

Developers have been trying to subdivide this land for years. On the other side of the highway adjacent to this, an old mill is currently being converted into a subdivision. The Coastal Reserve runs along this strip, joining National Park Reserve with the Solitary Island Marine Reserve, producing something of a buffer to development and one side of an argument for conservation and preservation of biodiversity. The tension between the city and the country here is palpable.<sup>6</sup> The inevitability of change appears unstoppable, but the quality of specific changes still weighs in the balance.<sup>7</sup> In this I find some encouragement to make arguments, speak up and act. By the way, termites eat out the banksia along the foreshore and the kingfishers use the decay to nest in 'arboreal termitarium' or tree hollows (four to six eggs).<sup>8</sup>

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Once in his life a man ... ought to give himself up to a particular landscape of his experience, to look at it from as many angles as he can, to wonder about it, to dwell upon it. He ought to imagine that he touches it with his hands at every season and listen to the sounds that are made upon it. He

ought to imagine the creatures there and all the faintest motions of the wind. He ought to recollect the glare of noon and all the colours of the dawn and dusk.

N. Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain*<sup>9</sup>

Anyway, my life is a beach ... or maybe in the end could it just be a wave? Well, it pretty much consists of a few beaches and a couple of headlands (beyond this teaching in a nearby regional city). Don't get me wrong, I am not complaining. I gave myself up to this particular landscape some time ago, both the way of living and the process of recollection and contemplation. You might call it a method for research.<sup>10</sup> I do. And I also consider this decision, or gamble with fate, as a work of art.<sup>11</sup> Pleasure derived from the genius of place.<sup>12</sup> A single-minded pursuit kept alive in the delicate weave of day-in, day-out, wonder and return, rehearsal and performance. A living here and now that becomes substantive beyond the passing moment. A present made possible by a recuperation of the transient in the resonance of an intimate knowing, embodied in relationship with a sentient place. To be gently held resting in the delight of emplaced connections. It's hard to be sure, but fuck I love this place.

I am a surfer enmeshed in coast. A pirate troubled by guilt and assuaged with desire. Embodying the intricacy of a lived cartography, a heart-marked map with details etched invisibly on the soles of my feet.<sup>13</sup> Enacting the steps of a tacit mutiny divined in the poetry of a rolling wave. Oceanic joys tempered with a troubled mindfulness. The terror of ghostly memories that live embedded in the legacy of the past, unbowed by time and attempts to rehabilitate space. Barbarity best confronted face to face, face to place, day to day, with an operative openness for supporting the margins and acts of largesse. I kiss my welcome to country from Gumbaingirr people and treasure their friendship. Acknowledging with respect their dreaming, the elders and care for country. I acknowledge the disregard for the dreaming, the elders and care for country that my ancestors display. Without presumption I enter into a sacred trust with the living and the dead, the human and the non-human to become known here and to know.

These are awkward passions. Passions that refuse to elide the contradictions, while seeking a ground for varied forms of belonging to a particular

place. Tempered and complicated somewhat in the ordinary demands and affairs of everyday life. Such as financial pressure, time constraints, employment opportunity, domestic arrangements, relationship difficulties, transport, traffic, fatigue, aging and so on. However I invariably find myself enlivened by the sea, the coastal surrounds and the movement among them. According to the vagary of chance and fortune, rhythm and cycle, wind and light, lightening and thunder, landfall and lowering. A poetics choreographed in the production of shared autonomous space.

This is the performance of bodies celestial, terrestrial and aquatic, human and non-human, whose practices are routinely animating sentient archives with auto-choreographies. Auto-choreographies present diverse phenomenon for experiential self-other directed learning, research and creative analysis. Auto-choreographies might also be considered as a writing practice of flow and movement, anchored in place-sensitive accounts. These movements are consonant with the conditions of life and matter, which perform an auto-choreography of complex intricacy and extremity, in the swirling dervish of the cosmos. Auto-choreographies can therefore be theorised, as the performance, improvisation and mutuality of movements within a dynamic field. This allows for a complex diversity of interactions between actors and agencies, in the broadest sense, of living organisms-in-the-environment-in-the-cosmos. I am swept up in an orchestration not of my making but one worthy of my curiosity and engagement.

I consider sentient archives to be maintained in the convolution and flux of a multi-faceted material record.<sup>14</sup> The formulation of these complex material surfaces resounds with a particular feel for a place (particular space-times). The atmosphere of these significant life forces and relations provide inquiries for a sensuous form of scholarship. The sinuosity of these imaginative-material elements, the shape and shift of action and interaction, coalesce in manifest ecologies. In Indigenous ecology this would refer to places of power or sites of increase from which clever people draw wisdom but otherwise live day to day. These significant sites are thresholds and portals which offer passage into the pedagogy of place. By this I mean the art of learning from a particular place to be an inhabitant of a shared community, living together in kinship as organisms-in-the-environment. The new ecology asserts such an ethic for rethinking the fragmented landscapes and habitat depletion of colonisation and capitalism.

Such an ethic and pedagogy of place demands a commitment to particular landscapes, immersion in the field, creative methodologies and ethical interventions contra to the assumptions of human dominance and untroubled exploitation. I propose this as an agenda for rural cultural studies and the ecological humanities, to contribute to and provide multi-sited, multi-voiced and situated analysis.<sup>15</sup> I agree with Deborah Rose's argument for scholarship that faces environmental crisis and begins to work with the challenges it confronts, mindful of not redoubling the folly.<sup>16</sup> By drawing on pattern and confusion, trace and erasure, myth and memory, story and narrative, by working among the volatile and sensitive detail of the senses, all implicated in fraught relationships to and in place.

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Each one of us, then, should speak of his roads, crossroads, his roadside benches; each one of us should make a surveyor's map of his lost fields and meadows. Thoreau said that he had a map of his fields engraved in his soul.

Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*<sup>17</sup>

Two highways run through my soul, the new and the old. The existing highway goes straight through my everyday life. On one side the marshy wetland of coastal foreshore and haphazard settlement. On the other, mixed acreage farms and homesteads with bananas, blueberries, tomatoes, coffee, cattle and pot. All hemmed in by ridges and valleys at the foot of the Great Dividing Range and state forest. These are pockets where the mountain range pushes close to the coast. A fragment of Pacific Highway, dotted by too numerous roadside memorials (their remains) and the spectre of tragic accidents. Day and night the black serpent transports thousands of unsuspecting vehicles with their passengers, each taking their chances, just as you and I do. Even in the abandon of a cardboard sign, a person asks for a ride, amid roadside smog and mayhem. Mega-trucks, trucks, buses, vans, bikes, heavy machinery, wide-loads, police, ambulance, fire-trucks, luxury cars and old bombs, enervate the strip with beguiling rhythm. When the swell runs, so do the number of vehicles loaded with surfboards, heading up and down the coast chasing waves. The thrill mitigates the thought of tragedy. As do numerous other necessities and

desires. The appeal of the dual lane carriageway connects with the plausible idea of head-on proofing the road. But a bypass here would be bliss.

The stretch of old highway winds for several kilometres in a scribbled loop on the western side of its predecessor. Delightfully misleading by heading westward, betraying access to the coast which is offered by an adjoining road and highway overhead, into the village where my house is a short walk to Witches. If you follow the old highway back from the southern exit, you drive through small acreage, past the local primary school and on the left Johnsons, Holloways and Morgans roads. On these back roads which filter discretely into the state forest, you are likely to pass an old bomb or four-wheel-drive working vehicle; nevertheless, each passing car will give you a wave. The deeper you press into these hills, the more conspicuous the idle wander becomes. Like the story I heard of the fellow who went around telling his mountain neighbours of the purchase of a new four-wheel drive, to avert the alarm this might cause. There are also a number of Indian banana growers and blueberry farmers. To pass working men with turbans and women with saris is commonplace. I have lived in Holloways Road, in an old farmstead rented from an Indian banana grower. In those days rents were cheap, unemployment high and the dole better than a banana labourer's wages. The era when Bob Hawke's surf team made dole bludging appealing, despite the stigma and hardship.

The only right-hand exit before you rejoin the Pacific Highway is Diamond Head Drive, so named after the large headland at the southern end of the beach. Waves peeling off the point (a rare event) is the insignia of the primary school badge with the motto 'learn to live'; you cannot help but think 'learn to surf'. The pared-down ethos grows on you after a while. I wonder how much the pedagogy of place might filter into the future curriculum, from primary through secondary and on to tertiary education, particularly at the (bio)-regional university where I work.<sup>18</sup> It's not uncommon for me to have first-year undergraduates in my classes who I have seen grow from toddlers of friends and acquaintances into young adults in their own right. The value of promoting critical, cultural and ecological literacy, as a grassroots place-based approach to bio-regional questions, seems a clear and present imperative.

Diamond Head Drive lifts up over a hill and gradually falls into the swampy wetland adjoining the beach. The highway cutting goes at right angles through the

hill and the only access point to the village is an overhead bridge. This divides the small village—as the graffiti ‘Westside’ on the bus shelter signifies. A beachside telegraph pole marks different turf, with the scrawl 245motherfuckin6 brazenly carved into the wood, continuing the postcode trend the Bra Boys sadly popularised. There are the obligatory ‘locals only’ signs, positioned at the end of the road leading to the back beach. Ironically, the village of about three hundred dwellings sits on converted farmland the early selectors prised from the Gumbaingirr, courtesy of the Robinson Land Act of 1861. They selected land here from the 1880s, on the condition of cutting down trees, putting up fences, raising crops and building dwellings. They gained access by sea, in the shelter of a headland just north of here, and began a process of colonisation which gradually displaced Gumbaingirr from their semi-nomadic coastal haunts (evidence of which abounds in widespread middens, axe factories and meeting places). They re-enacted the same encounters first played out at Kurnell.

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The discoverers struggling through the surf were met on the beaches by other people looking at them from the edges of the trees. Thus the same landscape perceived by the newcomers as alien, hostile or having no coherent form was to the indigenous people their home, a familiar country, the inspiration of dreams.

Rhys Jones, *Ordering the Landscape*<sup>19</sup>

The irony of these conflicting perceptions of landscape continues to be played out in the deceptive neo-colonial authority of capitalism. The impact of the colonial aftermath remains unresolved, and reconciliation still languishes on both sides of SORRY. Non-indigenous relations to country, too, often continue to be framed in the fraught terms of alienation, hostility and confusion. The perceived need for an imposed order to control the environment (instead of development) is indicative of a deeper ignorance which redoubles the threats. Efforts to alleviate these anxieties and insecurities, paradoxically, wreak more havoc, and further exacerbate the situation. Anthropogenic climate change presents no shock to those well-versed in the history of degradation in this country: deforestation, soil erosion, rising salinity,



air and water pollution, mineral extraction, chemical and biological waste, construction, industrialisation and landscape modification. Existential challenges are fuelled by solutions often worse than the problems and valorised in a vernacular humanism, perpetuated in the mythic narrative of helping your mates in the face of a crisis, as if this is something only Australians do.

On the mid-north coast I am concerned with the sub-region identified by Planning NSW as the Coffs Coast (Tourism NSW refers to the area crassly as Nature's Theme Park). In this sub-region, the chief threat to retaining biodiversity and the sound ecology, imperative for a bio-regional response to environmental crisis, comes from human activity which represents both problem and possible solution. The two considerations which also serve as key indicators of the current challenges and pressures are the upgrade of the highway to dual carriageway (vehemently opposed by residents and community organisations) and the Mid North Coast Development Strategy, which moots projections for Coffs Harbour to increase industrial land by eighty-three hectares and forecasts 18,600 new dwellings along the Coffs Coast. While the rhetoric ensures consideration of sensitive coastal locations and natural environments, the realities are always less secured.

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I'm interested in the weather. Who isn't? We groom for the atmosphere. Daily we apply our mothers' prognostics to the sky. We select our garments accordingly; like flags or vanes we signify. But I'm interested in weather also because cultural displacement has shown me that weather is rhetoric. Furthermore, it is the rhetoric of sincerity, falling in a soothing, familial vernacular. It's expressed between friendly strangers. I speak it to you. A beautiful morning. You speak it back. The fog has lifted. We are now a society.

Lisa Robertson, 'The Weather: A Report on Sincerity'<sup>20</sup>

After lunchtime on a sultry summer afternoon I quickly look at the meagre surf and decide to have a coffee before a quick go-out. I pop into the Saltwater Restaurant for a take-away coffee. The restaurant overlooks the beach and has been refurbished a number of times since its original incarnation as the Esmeralda Holiday Units. The

current premises are more upmarket, with a swish a la carté restaurant downstairs and a three-bedroom luxury apartment upstairs. The take-away service is provided for regular clientele and locals. While I am waiting I notice a tanned middle-age guy booking into the apartment, collecting the keys and making arrangements for a large dinner party upstairs that evening. Twenty minutes later we are both standing on the shore about to paddle out. I give him a quick welcoming nod and suss out the mini-mal he is holding. His physique tells me he surfs a couple of times a week or mainly weekends and is probably not a total kook. I could be wrong.

The waves are small but the water is a balm. There are patchy clouds rolling away in the distance toward Groper Island and afternoon light bathes the scene. I sit waiting for a wave that takes my interest, but not many do, today. The dude looks my way and so begins the exchange of pleasantries. Water fine, sun warm, beats working, would not be dead for quids. I draw the line and catch a shitty little wave. I can see where this is going and feel defensive. Nonetheless, in the course of intermittent exchanges, he finds out I am into cultural research and ecology, while I discover he is a landscape architect for developers up and down South East Queensland (we come in after the developers and clean up, he says). I live over the next headland and he lives at the northern extreme of New South Wales at Fingal. We agree that a vibrant coastal ecology needs to be retained and, more so, renewed. However, I am uneasy when he suggests the market will take care of the coast. The notion of professional people moving to the coast, buying up land and advocating for restrained land use just somehow doesn't sit right. A small, well-formed wave takes me from one end of the beach to the other and I leave with more troubled thoughts. Like, what the fuck is he doing here?

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The word 'love' comes to mind. Love is so central to place that it shimmers on the horizon of much of our writing. How would we bring love into the heart of writing place I do not exactly know. For ethical reasons and for the future of scholarship and the future of places, I believe we must do so.

Deborah Bird Rose, *Writing Place*<sup>21</sup>

This is the culmination of five days of intense immersion, surfing an entire swell in one location, for up to seven hours a day. The morning sessions are around three hours and the afternoon sessions from 4 pm until sunset. There is a certain momentum leading up to any full moon, but on occasion this becomes more clearly defined. Particularly when any given weather system locks into a conducive pattern for surfing. The ordinary banality of weather description becomes eroticised when surfing prognostics are heightened in the pull of compelling conditions. Take, for example, the curving gradient of one system, tightening around another system's pulsating energy.

In this instance, long-range swell intervals were accompanied by subtle zephyrs, panting upon the glassy surface of luminous bottle-green liquid expanses. Sinking into the viscous embrace of the line-up, the surfboards' buoyancy offers the best seats in the house. Fiji is devastated, Queensland half under water and one third of Victoria alight. This is much more than a straightforward account of a realised gratification, cheap anthropomorphism or 'self-enthronement'.<sup>23</sup> The love for any place becomes layered in bittersweet associations, attachments and connections, which transcend the claims of the autonomous individual subject. The search for a language or writing practice that might nonetheless articulate the wonder and the affect is beguiling.

The afternoon wears on beautifully (like a favoured garment) with the sun sinking and the moon rising in unison. This sets up a peculiar but fitting landscape iconography. Between waves and in the rhythm of long intervals, I quaff the unfolding scene in a heady mix of sensory stimulus.<sup>24</sup> There is a period late in the day when I am the only one surfing the cove. The moon is hovering over the headland with such sweet influence. The sun setting over the range, etching details which otherwise are obscured in the distance. A distance contrasted further by two items of Indigenous and non-Indigenous dreaming, the South Solitary Islands with the lighthouse to the east and Mount Coramba with the communication tower to the west. The orange blob and the pearl planet hang momentarily as polar opposites.

The scene becomes enchanted and dreamlike. There is a brahminy kite flying back and forth in a circuit, from the entrance of the headland cave, to the beach and back. The light from the sun is now lowering on the landscaped horizon, across the

valley to the mountain backdrop. Kangaroos grazing on the hill move about positioning themselves to take in the sunset. Backlit from this angle the sea turns into an oily ebony mass, a writhing surface of silk to paddle on. Oncoming swells rise and fall beneath body and board which gurgle through the water on the paddle back out. The headland in this filtered light looms in the left of frame, as a benign presence watching over the proceedings. This is a beach where turtles leave on ocean journeys, across the Pacific to Peru and back to the very place where they were born.

On the wave, the glare of golden light is so blinding that the ride becomes all feel and less reliant on sight. The surface conditions provide such smoothness under foot that the slide becomes a dance. The tide is topping and the waves are long and full, standing up enough to catch, but then backing off into solid marble slabs. They shimmer through the water away from the bay and down the line. Riding unbroken waves is usually the preserve of tow-in surfing, but the 'Fish' I am riding is perfectly suited for catching and riding these types of waves. The wave gave surfing and the Hawaiians a gift to planetary oceanic culture, the board let us ride. Surfers play with the ontology of various designs to support their own pursuit of flow states and recursive living that keeps the land and sea in constant connectivity.<sup>25</sup>

I leave the water before the sun fully sets, wanting to take in the scene once again from the headland, before dark. I clamber up the track of braided paths worn by the repetition of countless steps. Half way up I pause, looking out on the serenity of the cove with the thrill of the afternoon lingering in my body. At the top, I stand talking to a couple who are sitting on a picnic blanket sipping wine. You looked like you were having fun, the woman says (I recognise her now as a disability support worker in some of my classes). I smile in the glowing light and feel as though my face and the sky merge. Mist is rolling off the foreshore scrub and the whole space becomes narcotic.

In the car park I become aware my mind is spare of thought and my body full of feeling. I drive through the gateway of the nature reserve; this once was an actual gate which surfers would leave open, to the ire of farmers. At the top of the rise I pass a girl pedalling a pushbike over the hill. As I go past and begin my descent, I look in the rear-vision mirror, she leans back and stops pedalling, her long brown hair is flowing in the breeze and I catch a glimpse of a Mona Lisa smile. I take my

foot off the accelerator and our speeds synchronise. The music filling the car gives the whole sequence electricity. Birds through the air, surfers on a wave or paddling around, fish in the water, walkers on the beach, animals along bush paths, lovers sitting on a headland, a kid on a skateboard, turtles at sea, the girl on a bike and even me in the car. They are just some of the auto-choreographies animating the sentient archives of everyday places. The stuff we live and write.<sup>26</sup>

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Each leaf a runnel  
Roofs now skiffs in green  
I've never done anything  
But begin.

Lisa Robertson, *The Weather*<sup>27</sup>

By way of conclusion, the philosophy of research methodologies and everyday practices belongs in cultural studies but aspires to self-reflexivity, critique and transformation in every epistemological and ontological context, according to the indeterminate logic of what we study and a backward ingenuity that gives an element of surprise. Lisa Robertson, in her analysis of Atget's interiors, makes an astute observation which bears on academic practice: 'We might recognise the shape of change. This is called research. It intuits absence among the materials.'<sup>28</sup> In the context of climate, globalisation and capitalism, reading the shape of change becomes intensified with simultaneity.<sup>29</sup> Everyday life studies and place-based perspectives allows a reading of what Massey calls 'space-time envelopes' that speak like a message in a bottle from the 'annals of everyday life'.<sup>30</sup> In the modest concerns of limited case studies and place-based perspectives, one aspires to become a writer of what falls beneath the historical gaze as 'non-history'.<sup>31</sup> To take up a jumble of interesting materials, for artfulness and thoughts about how to live and communicate. To write like an electrical storm and read like the poetry of a rolling wave, which, after Bachelard, strikes a chord in the reader.<sup>32</sup> As I read on a bumper sticker on a purple Kombi, 'Why be normal?'. I thus summarise my manifesto to reclaim complete academic freedom as an act of auto-choreography.<sup>33</sup>

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—NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Tim Ingold and Lee Vergunst (eds), *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2008, p. 1.
- <sup>2</sup> For doctoral research based upon two place-centred case studies, which connect together in seven different walks for a project writing place and a philosophy of research methodology. This follows a methodological orientation to place, after Henry David Thoreau, *Walden and Civil Disobedience*, Harper and Row, New York, 1958 and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, Penguin, Middlesex, 1979. From which, in regard to Rousseau and others, Michel Serres theorises an approach known as 'la randonnée' the random circuit. See Pierre Saint-Amand, 'Contingency and the Enlightenment', *Substance*, 83, 1997, pp. 96–107.
- <sup>3</sup> Freya Mathews, *Reinhabiting Reality: Towards a Recovery of Culture*, SUNY Press, New York.
- <sup>4</sup> Peter Slater, Pat Slater and Raoul Slater, *The Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds*, Landsdowne–Rigby Publishers, Willoughby, 1986, p. 186.
- <sup>5</sup> Between the village of Sandy Beach and the town of Woolgoolga.
- <sup>6</sup> Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, The Hogarth Press, London, 1985. Williams' masterly exposition of settlement and change is instructive, from both literary and placed perspectives. See chapter 25, 'Cities and Countries', for his prescient commentary upon environmental crisis which brings into focus the importance of critical decision making.
- <sup>7</sup> Doreen Massey, 'Landscape as a Provocation: Reflections on Moving Mountains', *Journal of Material Culture*, 11, 2006, pp. 33–48.
- <sup>8</sup> Slater, pp. 186.
- <sup>9</sup> Natachee Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1969, p. 83.
- <sup>10</sup> Paula Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An Introduction to Classical and New Methodological Approaches*, Sage, London, 2003; Micheal Pryke, Gillian Rose and Sarah Whatmore (eds), *Using Social*

*Theory: Thinking through Research*, Sage, London, 1993; Simon Coleman and Peter Collins (eds), *Locating the Field: Space, Place and Context in Anthropology*, Berg, Oxford, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Blackwell Publishing, Carlton, 1991.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Taussig, *My Cocaine Museum*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Alphonso Lingus, *First Person Singular*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 2007, see chapter three, 'Where I Am'.

<sup>14</sup> Deborah Bird Rose, 'Fresh Water Rights and Biophilia: Indigenous Perspectives', *dialogue*, vol. 23, 2004, pp. 35–43; Ben Highmore, *Michel De Certeau: Analysing Culture*, Continuum, London, 2006, p. 21: 'requires different kinds of archives to be imagined and made'.

<sup>15</sup> Saukko, *Doing*. Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of the Partial Perspective', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 575–99, 1988.

<sup>16</sup> Deborah Bird Rose, 'Writing Place', in Ann Curthoys and Ann McGrath (eds), *Writing Histories: Imagination and Narrative*, Monash Publications in History, Melbourne, 2000, pp. 64–74.

<sup>17</sup> Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1969, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> See an exemplary project: Margaret Somerville, *Becoming-Frog: A Primary School Place Pedagogy*, 2007, <<http://www.aare.edu.au/07paps/som07443.pdf>>.

<sup>19</sup> Rhys Jones, 'Ordering the Landscape', in Dinah Dysart (ed.), *Edge of the Trees*, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Sydney, 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Lisa Robertson, 'The Weather: A Report on Sincerity', *Chicago Review*, 51: 4 & 52: 1, Spring 2006, pp. 28–37.

<sup>21</sup> Rose, *Place*, p. 74.

<sup>22</sup> Kim Satchell, *Seven Walks towards a Coastal Philosophy: A Field Guide to the Transformation of Everyday Life*, unpublished manuscript.

<sup>23</sup> Jason Cowley. 'The New Nature Writing', Editor's Letter in Jason Cowley (ed.), 'The New Nature Writing', *Granta: Magazine for New Writing*, 102, Granta, London, 2008, p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, Random House, New York, 1996.

<sup>25</sup> Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Isabella Csikszentmihalyi (eds), *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow Consciousness*, Cambridge University Press, Oakleigh, 1988.

<sup>26</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *Writing on Cities*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 1996.

<sup>27</sup> Lisa Robertson, *The Weather*, New Star Books, Vancouver, 2007, p. 78.

<sup>28</sup> Lisa Robertson, *Occasional Work and Seven Walks from the Office for Soft Architecture*, Clear Cut Press, Astoria, 2003, pp. 198, 199.

<sup>29</sup> Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Space', *Diacritics*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 22–7, 1986.

<sup>30</sup> Doreen Massey, 'Places and their Pasts', *History Workshop Journal*, 39, pp. 182–92, 1995. See De Certeau's entrée in *Practice vol 2*, titled 'The Annals of Everyday Life'.

<sup>31</sup> Highmore, *Certeau*, see chapter 2, 'An Epistemological Awakening: History and Writing'.

<sup>32</sup> Bachelard, *Poetics*, p. 100: 'a sort of musical chord would sound in the soul of the reader'.

<sup>33</sup> Kim Satchell, *The Wang of Do: The Art of Auto-choreography*, unpublished manuscript. The Sufi is in a dream, he has to live up-side-down and back-the-front, learning everything intuitively through spatial movement. He finds himself standing on the ceiling and from the moment he slides down the wall and begins to flow, everything begins to make sense. He becomes a surfer and fears one day he will wake up. Surfing makes perfect sense, as a field of operations in which to perform, what became known as The Wang of Do or The Way of Method.