Three Turns About the Garden: On Gardening as Educational World-Making

by

Reuben Jentink

Bachelor of Arts (Hons.), University of British Columbia, 2015

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the
Curriculum & Instruction: Equity Studies in Education Program
Faculty of Education

© Reuben Jentink 2022
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Fall 2022

Copyright in this work is held by the author. Please ensure that any reproduction
or re-use is done in accordance with the relevant national copyright legislation.

Declaration of Committee

Name:	**Reuben Jentink**
Degree:	**Master of Arts**
Title:	**Three Turns About the Garden: On Gardening as Educational World-Making**
Committee:	**Chair: Charles Scott** Adjunct Professor, Education
	Ann Chinnery Supervisor Associate Professor, Education
	Sean Blenkinsop Committee Member Professor, Education
	Cher Hill Examiner Assistant Professor, Education

Abstract

Gardening is something that we do: practices we learn and knowledges forged in practice. Even still, gardens are not always made according to human plans—and certainly not only by human hands. Gardens are composed with a host of nonhuman others, including the plants themselves, critters, soils, and elemental forces. With this in mind, my thesis queries the relationship between gardening as a practice and education as a process of "collective world-making" (Snaza & Singh, 2021). This work proceeds as a series of reflections grounded in the gardens that have marked my own social, political, and botanical formation. In the garden, one turns; and I propose "turning" as a method for research. Turning is a description of study: turning a conceptual object around and around, viewing it from all sides, paying careful attention to what becomes apparent through returning. While gardens are frequently closed-in spaces, this thesis works toward a style of garden storytelling that pays attention to what exceeds, spills over, or burrows beneath the garden walls. My hope is that such encounters with gardens can offer modes of critical engagement—not only as spaces where education happens but also as sites from which to reimagine what education can be and do.

Keywords: Land education; Turning as method; Critical garden studies; Nature writing

Acknowledgements

If you're friends with a gardener or are one yourself, you'll know the impulse to go out in the morning and see what's overnight happened. If you're lucky, something will have changed: a flower might have bloomed, a new set of leaves unfurled. Maybe a pot fell over. More often than not, it's almost indecipherable, that change, but you go out anyway, day after day. You stay interested. So many kind, curious, and generous friends and family members stayed interested. You treated me (and this project) like that garden. Asking, over and again, with almost no proof from me to show for it, how my writing was going. Trusting, encouraging, following up and following along. Until, one day, all of a sudden it was done. To all of you, thank you.

You include, Phanuel Antwi who scattered some of the very first seeds that eventually took root in this project. Keisha Charnley and the members of the xʷc̓ic̓əsəm Garden caretaking collective (Marie Weeks, Anna MacKay, Quill Christie-Peters, Caolan Barr, Faith Sparrow-Crawford, as well as Wilson Mendes and Garden Director, Eduardo Jovel) with whom I worked in the summer of 2016. Much of what I learned with and from all of you set out the turns that this project would take—even though at the time, it was barely yet an idea. I owe double—perhaps triple—thanks to my supervisor Ann Chinnery. Your careful, steady encouragement and years-long patience alone reassured me that something here was, in fact, worth figuring out. Sean Blenkinsop, Kumari Beck, and Coleman Nye, your keen attention shaped the course of my studies and honed many of the insights presented herein. An early version of this research was offered as a four-week-long place-based course called "Scavenging: Writing with the world around us" with Hum (the Humanities 101 Community Programme at the University of British Columbia). To the students who participated, thank you for your enthusiasm, humor, and criticality—even when it was sharp! Scavenging was one of a trio of summer courses offered alongside those of my friends and former colleagues at Hum, Academic Director, Margot Leigh Butler, and Programme Coordinator, Paul Woodhouse. An online weekly, trans-oceanic reading group with Marina Velez Vago (and others already mentioned) also bolstered my spirits during the long house-bound days of the last few pandemic years. My classmates, especially Nerlap Sidhu, Daniel Cooper, Dvorah Silverman, and Juliet Brown all encouraged the wonkiness of my thinking and whose own projects are strong, clearly-thought, and important. The everydayness of life—reading together,

walks, meals-shared, stressed-out phone calls—make projects like this possible. Friendships forged both inside and outside of the institution: thank you to Sheila Giffen, Kathleen Forrester, Grace McCauley, Dom Dube, Tom Hsu, and Justin Smith. Often, the best nourishment was to be able to forget (with you) about this project altogether.

We come to gardening from somewheres and from someones. Those someones closest to me include my parents, Erick and Miriam and their unruly, over-full but carefully-tended garden. From them, I learnt that gardens are at once the work of an afternoon and a lifetime. My brothers, Julian and Aaron, who make belonging in a family a matter of ordinary moments, shared jokes, hugs, hours. And my many aunts, uncles, and cousins, including especially Evelyn and Brian Martin, and Bronwyn and Leopold Kowolik. Our shared interests in questions of place, landscape, and artistry helped shape this project in so many afternoon and fire-side conversations. My omas and opas: Afje and Jan Kooiman who, when we were kids, would let my brothers and cousins and me make mud baths out of the rich dirt of their Albertan farmlands. (And afterwards hose us down—with a little too much enthusiasm—with frigid well water.) Addy and Jan Jentink whose yard offered so many opportunities for escape: into the back alley, gully, or neighbour's yard. These farmlands and urban gardens were two formative sites, both to this project as well as to how I have come to understand myself in relation to the world around me. Just as the garden, family relations grow. Debarah, David, Mark, Savanah, Sarah, Pearce, James, Julie, Anna, Caleb: thank you for welcoming me into your families. Two final thank yous are due. I consider myself especially blessed to know Erin and Jon Pearce (and Elanor and newly Ira) in that magic bothness of friend and family. Your care sustains me, nourishes me, roots me in the world in ineffable ways. And Mathew Arthur, who walked miles of this city with me, talking ideas through, sorting things out, putting parts together. Your love is felt, known—and deeply cherished. To many more miles of life walked together.

Table of Contents

Declaration of Committee ii
Abstract iii
Acknowledgements iv
Table of Contents vi
List of Figures vii

Introduction: In the Garden 1
Turns in the Garden 6
A Map to What Follows 8
Turning as Method 10
A Note on Genre 13

Chapter 1. The Garden Enclosed 19
1.1. It Starts at the Edge 20
1.2. In My Parents' Garden 24
1.3. Tending to Places and Peoples 26
1.4. Outside My Parents' Garden 28
1.5. Inheritances 31
1.6. What's Next 36

Chapter 2. The Garden Defined 38
2.1. The Place of Gardens 38
2.2. Gardens as a Staging of Relations 40
2.3. Gardens as a Life Lived in Balance 45
2.4. Gardens as a Mess 48
2.5. What's Next 50

Chapter 3. The Garden on Fire 52
3.1. Tulips 54
3.2. xʷčiċəsəm 58
3.3. Smoke 63

Conclusion: Retracing Our Steps, Remaking the World 68

References 73

List of Figures

Figure 1. Tu'Wusht Garden. UBC Farm, Vancouver (Musqueam territory). July 2017. Photo by author. ... 1

Figure 2. The back corner of my parents' backyard. Victoria (Esquimalt and Songhees territories). May 2017. Photo by author. ... 23

Figure 3. "Smart Farming," *Dissident Gardens*. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam. April 2018. Photo by author. ... 33

Figure 4. My Garden. Vancouver (Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territories). June 2022. Photo by author. ... 51

Figure 5. Blackberry thicket and old rice ponds. UBC Farm, Vancouver (Musqueam territory). June 2016. Photo by author. ... 62

Figure 6. Smoke at sunset over downtown. Vancouver (Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territories). September 2020. Photo by author. ... 63

Introduction: In the Garden

There are no walls or fences. My garden's boundaries are the horizon.

— Derek Jarman

Do you remember the sweetness

of freshly picked berries

between the reservations, the cities,

open land, seemingly untouched by white hands?

— Arielle Twist

Figure 1. Tu'Wusht Garden. UBC Farm, Vancouver (Musqueam territory). July 2017. Photo by author.

What do gardens have to do with education? What can be learned from spending time in the garden? Or from doing gardening? Who might we learn from and in what ways? Through our senses and other affective capacities, certainly, as well as careful, sustained observation, participation, and in practice. Gardening gets dirt under our fingernails and wiped across our foreheads. It strains and is felt in the body: expressed as sweat and sore knees. Gardening is carried out on the bodies of nonhuman others, including plants (pruned or mowed down) and soil (turned over, composted, or amended). Gardening is something that we do: practices we learn and knowledges forged in practice. So, what is the relationship between gardening as a practice and education, in the broadest sense, as a process of "collective world-making"?[1]

Nathan Snaza and Julietta Singh write that education is about making worlds together. What worlds do gardens and gardening make? If education is a collective undertaking, whose wellbeing is considered and how is it measured and accounted for? How might education in the garden be attuned to the needs and wants of particular forms of togetherness and include more-than-human ways of being? How can we make worlds that work both for humans (with our raced, sexed, gendered, classed, abilitied, and regional experiences) and nonhumans (with their own varied capacities and knowledges)? How, on Indigenous territories, do gardens and land-based pedagogies surface questions of Indigenous resurgence and sovereignty? On a planet facing interlocking ecological emergencies, what sorts of gardens and habits of tending might support a breadth of human and nonhuman lives and lifeways? Anthropologist of gardens Natasha Myers argues that gardens are spaces that teach about relationships with the nonhuman world.[2] What, then, can be said about such relationships? If tending to a garden is also a matter of care, how might we characterize the kinds of tending that distinct gardens require? The late anthropologist Deborah Bird Rose wrote that care is a practice that brings us "into fellowship with others."[3] It is an "ethical response involving tenderness, generosity, and compassion" and an "ongoing assumption of responsibility

[1] Nathan Snaza and Julietta Singh, "Dehumanist Education and the Colonial University," *Social Text* 39, no. 1 (2021): 9, DOI: 10.1215/01642472-8750064.

[2] Natasha Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse to Gardens against Eden: Plants and People in and after the Anthropocene," in *Infrastructure, Environment, and Life in the Anthropocene*, ed. Kregg Hetherington (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 125.

[3] Deborah Bird Rose, "Shimmer: When All You Love is Being Trashed," in *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, eds. Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, and Nils Bubandt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), G56.

in the face of continuing violence and peril."[4] Co-created as it is through the artfulness of plants and the visioning and skillful practices of gardeners, many practices of the garden—though certainly not all—might be described as fostering forms of multispecies fellowship. Even still, in the garden, care might look painful. What do forms of garden caretaking say about our relationship with the plants found within its enclosure—and also to the wider outdoors beyond its borders?

In what follows, I sculpt responses to questions posed above through a series of reflections grounded in the gardens at which I have spent much of my life. I offer these reflections to generate lines of inquiry that might be taken up by other educators in their own contexts—and from their own gardens! Gardens are often cast as sites of reflection. Sites where worlds are conjured in the quiet reflections made within—and *about*—the garden. How do garden stories and habits connect to the field of education? Does my work fit within institutional ecologies of and conversations around pedagogy and practice? If, as David Orr writes, "all education is environmental education," then it will not do to think only within disciplinary modes that standardize and regulate what counts as knowledge without a thoroughgoing appraisal of how formalized knowledges encode ideas about the human, nonhuman others, nature, and the world at large.[5] We need to think more broadly. For education to matter, Orr contends, it must meet the mounting ecological crises of the present. Orr's characterization of education can be thought together with Snaza and Singh: what worlds need making in our present moment? How might our collective makings respond to the unequally distributed effects of climate change; the urgent dynamics brought about by ecological collapse and entwined with ongoing colonial land theft; the violent removal of peoples and reconfiguration of lands in

---

[4] Rose, "Shimmer," G58.

[5] David W. Orr, *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect* (Washington: Island Press, 1994), 12.

service of plantation agricultures[6]; the injustices of environmental racism[7]; and growing social and political upheavals? Orr continues, "by what is included or excluded, students are taught that they are part of or apart from the natural world."[8] This is true both inside and outside educational institutions like schools, colleges, and universities. Meanwhile, activist and community groups engage in garden- and place-based educational pursuits that have little to do with standardized education. As designed spaces, gardens play a part in this environmental education, too. Gardens, Myers writes, are:

> performative and pedagogical: they dictate how people should stand in relation to nature; how plants ought to figure in people's lives; what plants are "for"; and how one should appreciate these forms of life as beautiful, healing, nourishing, exotic, dangerous, economically productive, or ecologically significant.[9]

Framed as such, gardens opportune various other educational inquiries: matters of justice or ethics; questions of economics or social relations; and geographical, historical, and literary considerations of place. All this can be thought *from* the garden. While it may sound like I am figuring the garden as an alternative classroom, far from simply being a contained site of learning, what gardens teach us implicates and spills out into myriad other domains of knowledge and practice. From knowledge about seasons and plant life, to methods for seed-saving and food preservation; from the pseudoscientific, to newly scientific; from questions of aesthetics and beauty, to intimate understandings of place. Gardens and gardening require forms of literacy that exceed

---

[6] See Katherine McKittrick's "Plantation Futures." McKittrick writes, "what was geographically at stake when the European centre extended itself outward, toward a space that was at once 'nowhere' and inhabited by 'no one,' yet unexpectedly 'there' and 'inhabited,' are race and racial geographies. . . . Native reservations, plantations, and formal and informal segregations are just some of the ways the lands of no one were carved up to distinguish between and regulate the relations of indigenous, nonindigenous, African, and colonial communities, with some geographies still being cast as uninhabitable for particular groups." (Katherine McKittrick, "Plantation Futures," *Small Axe* 17, no. 3 [2013]: 6, DOI: 10.1215/07990537-2378892.)

[7] What Rob Nixon has called "slow violence." There are numerous scholars to look to for definitions or explanations of the dynamics of environmental racism. What I like about Nixon's formulation, is its attention to the temporality of environmental devastations, and their ability to fade from public concern or consciousness as a result of their long, slow unfolding. Slow violences are "attritional catastrophes that overspill clear boundaries in time and space." They are marked by "displacements—temporal, geographical, rhetorical, and technological displacements that simplify violence and underestimate, in advance and in retrospect, the human and environmental costs. . . . [D]isplacements smooth the way for amnesia." (Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011], 7.)

[8] Orr, *Earth in Mind*, 12.

[9] Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse," 125-126.

institutional capture. Such knowledges are often held by those considered to be uneducated or who face barriers to institutional education. These felt, folk, or traditional knowledges are often inflected by the dynamics of class, race, and gender. For example, much of the labour that keeps public gardens looking trim is undertaken by precarious and racialized workers—even while such gardens are funded through granting bodies or endowments tied to extractive industries (and the families who control them[10]). Furthermore, as Michael Marker (Lummi Nation) notes:

> From an Indigenous standpoint, there is no sense made in questioning the place of nature in human history; there is only the nature of place that is to be understood as a way to recognize the meaning of history, time and space, and the structure of reality. All inquiry, in this cosmology, must begin with an awareness of the interconnectedness of plants, animals, and humans, geologic forms along with the stories that tune and shape cognition of a landscape that is also conscious of human beings.[11]

This, too, can happen *from* the garden as a natural space that is nonetheless conscripted into and codified by colonial histories of place. So, throughout this thesis, I make an effort to carefully track those instances where I might too quickly center or decenter the human, make appeals to inherited categories like “nature” without specificity, all the while treating the garden as an imperfect space still worthy of study.

My work is informed by la paperson’s formulation of a “ghetto land pedagogy,” which weaves together analyses of settler colonialism with critiques of settler environmentalism so as to propose a “decolonizing cartography as a method for land education.”[12] A ghetto land pedagogy insists on recognizing both the traditional territories and urban Indigenous peoples of a place. It rejects casting the urban as a wasteland in need of environmental rehabilitation. Instead, la paperson proposes a

---

[10] In Vancouver, for example, the 55-acre VanDusen Botanical Gardens are named for lumber magnate, Whitford Julian VanDusen. Along with the city and province, he bought the lands from Canadian Pacific Railway’s real-estate division. Not far from the botanical gardens, the Bloedel Conservatory, a domed greenhouse filled with tropical plants, flowers, and parrots was named for Prentice Bloedel. He donated the money for the conservatory’s construction shortly after overseeing the merger of his father’s lumber company with the HR MacMillan Company to form one of the largest forest products companies in the world.

[11] Michael Marker, “There is no *place of nature*; there is only the *nature of place*: Animate landscapes as methodology for inquiry in the Coast Salish territory,” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 31, no. 6 (2018): 454, DOI: 10.1080/09518398.2018.1430391. Emphasis in original.

[12] la paperson, “A Ghetto Land Pedagogy: An Antidote for Settler Environmentalism,” *Environmental Education Research* 20, no. 1 (2014): 115, DOI: 10.1080/13504622.2013.865115.

"poetics of land" that "learns from human resistance to mapping, from peoples' and nature's transgressions of maps, and from land itself as a bearer of memory."[13]

Moreover, I heed Eve Tuck (Unangax̂), Marcia McKenzie, and Kate McCoy's caution in noting that too often forms of environmental or place-based education are offered up as though they are "culturally or politically neutral" even while perpetuating "forms of European universalism."[14] Instead, their article reimagines land education as a practice that centres Indigenous "epistemological and ontological accounts of land" and includes Indigenous critiques of settler colonialism.[15] With these cautions in mind, my project knots together reflections on personally meaningful gardens and critical appraisals of how these gardens came to be, their political contexts, and the cultural forces that give them meaning. My hope is that my encounters with gardens can offer modes of critical engagement—not only as spaces where education happens but also as sites from which to reimagine what education can be and do.

Turns in the Garden

In the garden, one turns: turning over the compost heap; turning one's face toward the sun or an ear toward birdsong; turning beds down for winter; or taking a turn about the grounds in the evening's quiet. These prepositions signal bodies moving about the garden. They orient our habits, mark repetitions of movement and cue returning again to the same shaded corner, to tasks that need attention, or to sensations we crave. Such orientations also gesture at our commitments to and pleasures in the garden. They track our relations within the garden and document our specific knowledge of it: where and when things grow, first up in the spring, last to fade in the fall, and so on.

She "spoke for hours and I hung on every word," recalls Robin Wall Kimmerer (Potawatomi) of a presentation given by a Navajo woman ("without a day of university botany training in her life") during a symposium on Indigenous plant knowledge:

---

[13] la paperson, "Ghetto Land Pedagogy," 127.

[14] Eve Tuck, Marcia McKenzie, and Kate McCoy, "Land Education: Indigenous, Post-colonial, and Decolonizing Perspectives on Place and Environmental Education Research," *Environmental Education Research* 20, no. 1 (2014): 1, DOI: 10.1080/13504622.2013.877708.

[15] Tuck, McKenzie, and McCoy, "Land Education," 13.

> One by one, name by name, she told of the plants in her valley. Where each one lived, when it bloomed, who it liked to live near and all its relationships, who ate it, who lined their nests with its fibres, what kind of medicine it offered. She shared stories held by those plants, their origin myths, how they got their names, and what they have to tell us.[16]

The kind of knowledge Kimmerer describes—of the land, of the history of a place and its peoples, of the entanglement of plant and animal lifeways—is not the same as what the typical gardener knows. Rather, it is better described by what Marker calls "the nature of place": an understanding of the interconnectedness of all manner of lifeways, geologic temporalities, histories of a landscape, and cultural registers of meaning.[17] It might also be conceived of as a form of Indigenous governance committed to the ongoing maintenance of ecological balance. Cherokee author and scholar Daniel Heath Justice describes Indigenous governance as relationships that "extend beyond the human to encompass degrees of kinship with other peoples, from the plants and animals to the sun, moon, thunder, and other elemental forces." Indigenous nationhood, he writes, can be construed as "peoplehood," or a relational system that "keeps the people in balance with one another, with other peoples and realities, and with the world."[18]

What might it mean to think gardens this way? We might then be prompted to ask questions about a garden's history and of its place and formation. Human and nonhuman relationships of responsibility transform what is possible within and beyond a garden's walls. As for a garden's caretaking, what sets of obligations might multispecies relationality demand? As la paperson calls for, I am trying to apply conceptualizations of place, forms of governance, and a responsibility to the more-than-human world born of Indigenous studies in order to pace gardens (and their cultural histories) through a critique of settler colonialism. For garden historian Michel Conan, gardens and their histories cannot be studied "independently of the contested ideologies that they express and of the social movements that give prominence to these ideologies."[19] On Indigenous

---

[16] Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed, 2013), 44.

[17] Michael Marker, "There is no place of nature," 454.

[18] Daniel Heath Justice, "'Go Away, Water!' Kinship Criticism and the Decolonization Imperative," in *Learn, Teach, Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures*, eds. Deanna Reder and Linda M. Morra (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 354.

[19] Michel Conan, introduction to *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999), 4.

lands, I am inclined to also attend to historic processes of removal and a commitment to the return of Indigenous lands and waters. Critical garden literacy proposes that there is "no essence of a garden to be found in form, enclosure, or etymology." Gardens are simply places where "a social group engages in gardening." Defining gardens is thus contingent on the "economy, environment, and culture" of gardeners.[20]

Definitions abound, but the one I work with most closely throughout this thesis is that of Natasha Myers. She defines gardens as "sites where people *stage their relationships with plants*."[21] Thinking gardens as a series of staged relations sparks questions not only concerning the qualities and conditions of interspecies relationships within the hedged-in space of the garden; it also provokes questions of how gardens are thought of in relation to other natural spaces. Are urban or rural parks also gardens? For now, it is enough to say that, through a variety of infrastructural, architectural, historical, and cultural habits, parks also stage and teach how we are meant to "stand in relation to nature."[22] The university or city park rose garden's clipped formality asks that we stay out of the garden beds and on the bricked pathway. The forest trail allows for a little more deviance. Expansive, trimmed lawns might be dotted with polite signs asking you to "Stay Off." An unmown field, however, is cut through with paths made by all sorts of critters and humans, running in every direction. These orientations fall in line with how the garden has already taken shape. Or we might choose to stray off known paths. What turns will this thesis take? It depends on which gardens we visit.

A Map to What Follows

In Chapter 1, "The Garden Enclosed," I lay out this project's conceptual groundwork through a close examination of my parents' garden and its urban surrounds—where I spent a great deal of time as a child. It is here that my understanding of what a garden is first came to be: how we should inhabit it and what sorts of practices its upkeep entails. This introductory chapter functions to situate me in relation to the research that informed this thesis and the particular places where it was

---

[20] Michel Conan, "From Vernacular Gardens to a Social Anthropology of Gardening," in *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999), 183.

[21] Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse," 116. Emphasis in original.

[22] Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse," 125.

written—including local urban parks. Gardens are diverse; so too is the character of the place in which they grow. While the first chapter is tethered to where I write from, I hope its concerns might speak to others and their specific places and situations. Additionally, the first chapter is marked, temporally, by the concerns of spring and summer 2021. My writing and thinking is charged with the energy of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic; the months-long protests for Black life in the wake of the murder of George Floyd; and the discovery of the remains of Indigenous children's bodies at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School—then, at so many other schools across Canada and the US. These events inform the kinds of attention I pay to gardens and gardening.

Through philosopher Edward Casey's work on edges, I explore the ties between parks and gardens further. I follow Casey's account of the historical emergence of the garden in the ancient Middle East through to what we now know as municipal parks. I attend to the specific architecture of gardens as enclosed spaces and to the politics of enclosure. Thinking with enclosures like "property" or "family" brings up questions of inheritance, too. As Sara Ahmed teaches me, lines of inheritance are orienting. They turn us to the world in profound ways. I close the first chapter with a brief discussion of how inheritance works to educate us in either harmful or life-giving ways of relating to the natural world.

In Chapter 2, "The Garden Defined," I ask what histories and tropes inform our understanding of the garden. I pose gardens as a definitional problem—though I am not after a fixed definition, per se. Rather, I remain interested in how understandings and evaluations of distinct garden types (like formal rosariums, wildflower, pollinator-friendly, or naturalistic gardens) implicate certain conceptualizations of nature, wilderness, and cultivation. As a "staging of relations" between plants and people, gardens generate questions about descriptions of human and nonhuman relationships and the world around us. I work closely with Myers' definition to give conceptual shape to gardens: what they are, how they are thought and represented, and what sorts of concepts they assemble. How, as educators, might we stay attuned to the edges enacted by forms of environmental education?

In Chapter 3, "The Garden on Fire," I foreground the necessity of thinking new ways of relating to the natural world—both within and beyond the garden's walls. This third chapter is an experiment in writing the garden otherwise. I begin with an exploration

of garden storytelling as an educational practice. By way of the tulip and its histories, I show how plant life is caught up in colonial logics, scientific knowledge production, as well as other more expansive forms of relation. Grounding my insights in the xʷċiċəsəm garden at the University of British Columbia's teaching and research farm and in my own small garden, I attempt to show how alternative forms of nature writing challenge concepts of purity embedded in environmental education. Local wildfires turn my attention to smoke (and its irreverence for enclosure). I think with smoke as a means to signal how edges and other boundaries cause harm.

Turning as Method

The language of turning I invoke above recalls Sara Ahmed's work on affective "stickiness." For Ahmed, turns are not merely physical (though oftentimes they are) they also broker potentials for meaning and action. "Depending on which way one turns," she writes, "different worlds might even come into view." For Ahmed, bodies and subjectivities are shaped by repeated turns.[23] We might say, then, that gardening—as a set of repeated and orienting practices—makes both gardens and gardeners. But the practices through which gardens and gardeners come to be legible are not universal. Practice can be otherwise. Thinking Myers' concept of staged relations and Ahmed's turning as world-making, we might ask what worlds gardens are designed to reproduce, what practices they embed, normalize, and teach—and how otherwise practices might be brought to bear on the matter of education.

Turning is also a description of study: to turn a conceptual object around and around. To view it from all sides, over and again. To practice paying careful attention to what becomes apparent through returning. This thesis' chapters are a series of turns. They are not progressive, though they do build one on the other. Each chapter takes the garden and turns it over and around as a conceptual object that gains its features through different modes of analysis. Likewise, a turn about the garden at different times of day, months of the year, or weather (or even in different moods) might precipitate new understandings. Gardens are seasonal: the tender new growth of spring, the exuberance of summer, the wilting of fall, the retreat of winter. All our tasks and turns about the

---

[23] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 15.

garden are likewise varied: attending to certain chores, scents, varieties of ripeness or rot, according to what needs doing, is pleasurable, or can be left for another day.

Writing my chapters as turns is a stylistic and methodological decision. In an ethnography of the matsutake mushroom, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing writes that listening to and telling a "rush of stories" is a method. Proliferating stories "cannot be neatly summed up"—they have uneven scales and tempos and inhabit incommensurable geographies.[24] Similarly, the turns in this thesis are concerned with competing histories, overlaid geographies, and temporalities out of sync: personal memories, commercial plant species commodity chains, plant lifeways, weather patterns, and histories of place that all come to inform my analysis. I tend to present vicissitudes and devastations brought by climate collapse, pandemic, and other systemic injustices. For Tsing, a rush of stories relies on revitalizing "arts of noticing," a non-innocent mode of engagement that expands possibilities for imagining how to live "despite economic and ecological ruination."[25] Tsing's problematic poses a question to gardeners and their gardens, too: in a world coming increasingly undone, whose lifeways, human and not, do gardens support in their varied composition? What other worlds might gardens inspire?

In his essay, "The Man Made of Words," Kiowa novelist N. Scott Momaday fuses concerns about land and landscape with those regarding language, experience, storytelling, and imagination. Momaday suggests that, at least once in our lives, we ought to surrender "to a particular landscape." He asks us to appraise it from many angles, to ponder and dwell upon it, to touch it during every season, and listen to its sounds.[26] This has been my approach. I focus my attention on gardens and gardening in places (and on constitutive practices) that, at first, seem to offer a geography more restricted in size and reduced in composition than larger landscapes—but allow me to practice what Momaday outlines. In the world as it is currently composed and for city-

---

[24] Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 37. Emphasis in original.

[25] Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, 19.

[26] N. Scott Momaday, "The Man Made of Words," in *The Remembered Earth: An Anthology of Contemporary Native American Literature*, ed. Geary Hobson (Albuquerque: Red Earth Press, 1979), 164.

dwellers, urban gardens might be the only scale at which such modes of attention are possible.

Paying attention in this way affects the composition of my thesis. It allows for the garden to be a focus of study: a text to be read closely. Following Momaday, I did not want to simply read about gardens. I want the garden itself to act as interlocutor, to be present in the text as a site of knowledge and a source of writerly inspiration. This is a pedagogical choice. Insights emerge in the moment of gardening. To write the garden in this way requires a particular kind of attention: not necessarily specialized, though in time perhaps productive of the knowledge described by Kimmerer above. It is, however, always specific and situated, slow and drawn out. It is an imperfect practice—blurring garden and writer. But I hope to tarry in the pause called for by Isabelle Stengers' "cosmopolitical proposal," a form of epistemological humility meant to "slow down the construction of this common world, to create a space for hesitation regarding what it means to say 'good.'"[27]

Take, for example, a logging road cut straight through the forest; at first glance, it may be appraised as violence to the land—and it is. But a clearing also lets sunlight fall to the forest floor and blueberries soon follow. Blueberries grow in the wake of devastation. Writing about ways of living through "realities of destruction," Erin Marie Konsmo (Métis) and Karyn Recollet (Cree) say, "Berries are already teaching us."[28] Rather than seeking out sites of natural purity or perfection, Konsmo and Recollet imagine a form of care for urban Indigenous peoples and devastated lands that takes a harm reductive approach. In no way are they advocating for clearcuts in hopes of more blueberries. Instead, they teach that, if damage is all that we see,[29] then we risk abandoning places and peoples to the harms that accompany settler colonialism. If

---

[27] Isabelle Stengers, "The Cosmopolitical Proposal," trans. Liz Carey-Libbrecht, in *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, eds. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 995.

[28] Erin Marie Konsmo and Karyn Recollet, "Meeting the Land(s) Where They are at," afterword to *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, eds. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, (New York: Routledge, 2018), 245, DOI: 10.4324/9780429505010.

[29] See also, Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no.3 (2009): 409-427.

Indigenous homelands are only seen as left in ruins or "forever changed by cityscapes," how can they be encountered and cared for?[30]

From Stengers, Konsmo, and Recollet I learn to slow down the adjudication of "good." When it comes to questions of environmental education, we might stall conceptualizations of nature as good or bad, wild or in ruins, in order to inquire into the conditions of multispecies wellbeing that inform what counts as good—and according to whom. Neither should we forget that gardens and gardening do not necessarily correspond to institutionalized education's timelines and deadlines. (A new blueberry patch might take years to form.) Most of what happens in the garden cannot be observed over the course of a class, semester, or degree program.[31] The garden, according to critic Olivia Laing, exists in a different temporality, one that is already primed for such a pause—if we do not force it. She writes:

> Gardening situates you in a different kind of time, the antithesis of the agitating present of social media. Time becomes circular, not chronological; minutes stretch into hours; some actions don't bear fruit for decades. The gardener is not immune to attrition and loss, but is daily confronted by the ongoing good news of fecundity. A peony returns, alien pink shoots thrusting from bare soil. The fennel self-seeds; there is an abundance of cosmos out of nowhere.[32]

A Note on Genre

Tsing's rush of stories is writing that follows from careful attention. We should not mistake "rush" for any kind of hastiness. For my project, this means paying attention to the garden's atmospheres, human and nonhuman inhabitants, seasonalities and temporalities of growth and decay, and its economies, infrastructures, and so on. For Tsing, a multiplicity of stories is both a method and a genre, an "experiment in form" that is also argumentation.[33] Writing my chapters as turns is a stylistic choice that also gestures at the writing modalities and conventions that characterize "nature writing"

---

[30] Konsmo and Recollet, "Meeting the Land(s)," 244.

[31] Jessica Caporusso, "Resisting Toxic 'Growth'? Cultivating Good Relations amid Toxic Legacies of Green Development" (presentation, Society for Social Studies of Science [4S] Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October 6, 2021).

[32] Olivia Laing, "Paradise," in *Funny Weather: Art in an Emergency* (New York: Norton, 2020), 126.

[33] Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, viii.

broadly construed. The garden journal, a subcategory of nature writing and pedagogical record, holds relevance for both my research and manner of writing. The late cultural theorist Lauren Berlant writes, "genres provide an affective expectation of the experience of watching something unfold, whether that thing is in life or in art."[34] Nature writing is no different: it primes how we understand our relationships and experiences with the natural world around us. To riff on Donna Haraway (herself riffing on Marilyn Strathern), it matters "what stories tell stories."[35] It matters what stories we use to tell the story of the garden. It matters what gardens gardeners garden.

All the same, garden journals can be dull. Often organized according to the calendar, these journals record the names of what has been planted (Latin or common); where starts or seeds were purchased and for how much; any new variety of seeds tried or failed; lists of seeds saved or cuttings taken; temperatures and the weather's increasing unpredictability; and other such banalities of the garden. In its own imprecise ways, the garden journal is empirical research, a record of how gardens work to educate. Garden journals might also record intriguing stories about particular species of plant or some everyday excitement at the nursery. They may include lines of poetry, notes on a species' entanglement within global networks of trade, or musings on one's own health. They can be chronological, messy, or disconnected. As a genre, the garden journal charts a distinct path from that of much of contemporary nature writing. There are no romantic accounts of the sublime here. Garden journals are ordinary. They record the ongoing reconfiguration of relationships with the natural world. They challenge what is offered by, for example, the standard-bearers of Western environmentalism: Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, and others who favour contemplative, solitary withdrawal into wilderness. As Michael Pollan notes regarding differences in gardeners' and naturalists' writing, the latter are preoccupied with "how to *be* in nature" and what kinds of "perceptions to have," whereas the former "*[want]* to act."[36] In the garden, like the genre of garden journal, the gardener's labour to get things just so is ever-present. So too are

---

[34] Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 6.

[35] "It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories." (Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* [Durham: Duke University Press, 2016], 12.)

[36] Michael Pollan, *Second Nature: A Gardener's Education* (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991), 3. Emphasis in original.

inevitable failures and the frustrating willfulness of the vegetal and critter beings whose lifeways buck human desires and designs in the garden. "How agitated I am when I am in the garden, and how happy I am to be so agitated," writes author and essayist Jamaica Kincaid. "Nothing works just the way I thought it would, nothing looks just the way I had imagined it."[37] The garden is a composition. It is presented in writing (as I do here), but also composed with hands in the soil. Gardens are made in concert with plants, soils, visiting critters, and elemental forces. They afford myriad educational moments: learning from failure, tinkering or doing over, but also engaging the senses, offering time for reflection or stillness.

This is why I like the garden. It is a site that has been made. It is never untouched. We are primed to recognize the gardener's involvement and this affects how we think of nature and place. The shape of any garden catalogues efforts, aesthetic desires, and willingness or refusal to let other critters find pleasure in the garden. Whether a space of learning or a teacher in and of itself, the garden is historically produced and charged with ideologies, for better or worse.[38] No garden is perfect and much of gardening might be damaging. But tending to the garden is a practice through which we might learn about our own place in nature. (Or not, as Orr reminds us of education's taken for granted categories.) My interest in the educational potential of gardens and genres of nature writing is further informed by a conviction that urban populations have strong, meaningful relations with the natural world. Connections formed despite "old familiar strain[s] of fascism in nature writing," as Kathryn Schulz succinctly puts it, that vilify cities as "breeding grounds for the foreign and impoverished."[39] Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo calls this "imperialist nostalgia": a phenomenon whereby "agents of colonialism" mourn for the very thing they destroyed. People destroy lands and waters but "worship nature."[40] My own sense is that much of nature writing tarries in this form of nostalgia. It is not up to the task of teaching us how to live or confront the ecological urgencies of the present. It misses the violences

---

[37] Jamaica Kincaid, *My Garden (Book):* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999), 14.

[38] See, for example, Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn introduction to *Nature and Ideology: Natural Garden Design in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1997), 1-9.

[39] Kathryn Schulz, "Cat Tales," review of *The Snow Leopard* by Peter Matthiessen, *New Yorker* (July 12 & 19, 2021): 78.

[40] Renato Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," *Representations* no. 26 (Spring, 1989): 108.

through which the perceived purities of nature traffic and how notions of wilderness implicate colonial theft; the carving up of lands into nation-states and national park systems; racialized forms of agriculture; and so on. Political theorist Bedour Alagraa characterizes our present moment as an "interminable catastrophe" structured by plantation and slave histories and colonial encounters. Catastrophe, she writes, is a "structural condition, and a *way of life* imposed as a form of political and social domination, beginning with the New World colonial encounter(s)."[41] Climate change, species extinction, ecological collapse, all markers of the Anthropocene, cannot be thought separate from these formative dynamics. There is no nature outside of or immune to violence.

A final word on the connection between this thesis and the field of education more generally. Before and throughout my graduate studies, I worked with a community education program offering university-level courses, free of tuition and prerequisites, to residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES). Students in the program experience institutional, financial, health and other related barriers to education and face the pressures of ongoing gentrification and displacement in their home neighbourhoods. Many identify as political refugees, survivors of Indian residential schools, sex workers, and drug users. Despite Vancouver's proximity to the ocean and surrounding mountains and forests and its abundance of urban green spaces, natural areas are incredibly difficult to make use of without access to public transportation, disposable income for outdoor gear, and time to get away. Not to mention the increased scrutiny people face for their dress, personal hygiene, and bodily comportment in spaces that associate outdoor leisure with health.

The DTES neighbourhood's only waterfront park is named for this very difficulty: CRAB Park at Portside. Its name is an acronym for "Create a Real Available Beach." Officially opened in July 1987, the space is the result of five years of sustained community action to create a DTES-accessible waterfront park. Now, and despite strong community opposition, the Port of Vancouver has recently completed a major expansion project of its Centerm Terminal. Five massive cranes now obstruct views to the north shore mountains. In a city where environmentalism is a civic dogma, having no access

---

[41] Bedour Alagraa, "The Interminable Catastrophe," *offshoot journal*, March 1, 2021, https://offshootjournal.org/the-interminable-catastrophe/. Emphasis in original.

to natural spaces (or accessing such spaces the “wrong way”) can lead to feelings of shame or alienation. One of the ways I have tried to conceive of gardens and gardening is to ask: Who has access? Who is excluded? How is inclusion brokered?

I am thus wary of the ease with which discussions about gardens slip into familiar tropes of a romanticized nature, including urban greenspaces, evaluations of the “right” kinds of nature, and stigmatizing notions of purity and use. In the afterword to *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education*, Konsmo and Recollet reflect on the challenges urban Indigenous peoples face when trying to reconnect to their home territories and kinship obligations with humans, plants, animals, and elemental forces. Konsmo and Recollet’s care for urban and poisoned lands has been central to my conception of gardens and what they afford educators as sites neither pure nor innocent of history. “What does it mean to shame those who pick medicines in cities or at bus stops?” they ask. What does it mean for those living in the cities? Are urban plants and practices not medicine?[42] The differential conditions of Indigenous and non-Indigenous life are deeply entangled with infrastructures that harm and poison waters and lands, including the materialities and networks through which compost, fertilizers, and garden plants are made, grown, sold, and transported. Moreover, I hope to break with the reproduction of narratives that figure gardens as walled-in environmental havens. Rather, I encounter gardens as places with complicated and often violent histories of displacement and dispossession where modes of attention are shot through with ideas of property and purity. “We are entangled in infrastructure,” writes Konsmo. Purity practices in land and water use and management are civilizing and “ultimately ableist.” They set standards that cause shame and leave “very specific people behind.”[43]

I am not attempting to offer gardens as a panacea to already existing ideas of purity as attached to notions of the natural or the wilderness. Gardens are not pure. Neither am I proposing to disavow wilderness in favour of culturally-marked garden spaces as a fix for other longstanding urban escapisms. Instead, I wonder, with Konsmo, how we might attune to the conditions of our emplacement and “love and build right relations.” Waters, lands, and climates are elemental forces that we habitually harm and

---

[42] Konsmo and Recollet, “Meeting the Land(s),” 239.

[43] Quoted in Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, introduction to *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, eds. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, (New York: Routledge, 2018), 3, DOI: 10.4324/9780429505010.

pollute through the “infrastructures and systems we have to live through,” including waste management systems, manufacturing, and energy production.[44] How can educators attend to the often limited access our students have to natural spaces, including gardens, and to meaningful encounters with the natural world—no matter whether that “natural” is pristine or in ruins? In what follows, I hope to imagine ways of gardening and inhabiting gardens as spaces of learning rich with nonhuman teachers, all the while cultivating a sense of responsibility for the destructive forces that have produced our gardens and worlds.

[44] Quoted in Smith, Tuck, and Yang, introduction to *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education*, 3.

Chapter 1. The Garden Enclosed

Lately, the news cycle seems to take up any capacity I have for teaching and writing. A pandemic rages on—even as vaccinations offer a new kind of hope. (To say nothing of their vastly unequal global distribution.)[45] Anti-mask and so-called "freedom" rallies grow in size and frequency. New waves of anti-Asian and anti-Black racisms intensify, including brutal expressions of state, police, and civilian violence: George Floyd's murder,[46] the Atlanta spa shootings,[47] or deeply felt everyday racisms that slip under the radar. Housing and job inequalities persist. Climate change forces people the world over to flee; they are pushed up against built and administrative walls or the edges of continents and oceans. Large parts of our fragile planet are already or will soon be uninhabitable. In the face of ruin, the tending and upkeep of gardens—their pace and the quiet they afford—are uniquely privileged experiences.

In this opening chapter, I take up the garden as a material space composed of pathways, benches, flower beds, even statues or monuments, as well as birds flying overhead and worms moving about below ground. Often, a garden is hedged or fenced. I begin my analysis with a close examination of these built or cultivated enclosures. As I come to show, however, a garden's boundaries do not simply mark the extent of its material expanse, they also orient kinships and our social and political lives. In the garden, some lives and lifeways are made more liveable than others. Garden forms and gardening practices direct our understanding of plant liveliness: how they should look or act. The materiality of the garden, in other words, is tied up with certain configurations of the human and nonhuman and, crucially, with relationships of more-than-human ways of life. To demonstrate these effects, this chapter sketches out current events (both nearby and further abroad) and includes a protracted, personal reflection on my parents' garden

---

[45] Keith Collins and Josh Holder, "See How Rich Countries Got to the Front of the Vaccine Line," *New York Times*, Mar. 31, 2021, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/03/31/world/global-vaccine-supply-inequity.html.

[46] Tim Arango, Shaila Dewan, John Eligon, and Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs, "Derek Chauvin is Found Guilty of Murdering George Floyd," *New York Times*, Apr. 20, 2021, www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/us/chauvin-guilty-murder-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=10.

[47] Oliver Laughland and Peter Beaumont, "Atlanta Massage Parlor Shootings Leave Eight Dead Including Six Asian Women," *Guardian*, Mar. 17, 2021, www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/mar/16/atlanta-massage-parlor-shootings.

and the surrounding neighbourhood of James Bay in Victoria, BC, where I grew up. My analysis is specific to my own situation. It is partial—both non-comprehensive and offered from a particular vantage.[48] Moreover, it serves as the basis on which the content of subsequent chapters unfolds. If non-Indigenous scholars and educators (myself included) are interested in taking up questions of how land is conceptualized, how territory and place come to be understood, and how we might meaningfully grapple with being caught up in more-than-human responsibilities, then we must pay attention to the knowledges, concepts, and guiding metaphors that inform translation work across ontological and epistemological difference—from garden to page. Translation, Haraway reminds me, is "always interpretive, critical, and partial."[49] This chapter and the one to follow work toward that end.

1.1. It Starts at the Edge

In *The World on Edge*, philosopher Edward Casey examines the earliest appearances of gardens in ancient Middle Eastern civilizations. According to Casey, ours is an "edge-world." Edges, he contends, do so much more than "demarcate or delimit spatial spread or temporal extent." While edges sometimes indicate boundaries, they are a "formative force of their own."[50] Given his preoccupation with the edge, it is no surprise Casey's study surveys the evolution of early gardens and focuses heavily on their enclosure. Early gardens, he notes, were "almost always walled, or at least fenced," places of "retreat for the ruling classes."[51] Originating in Mesopotamia, walled gardens were typically set outside city limits. They came to be important spaces in the built world of Persian civilization, eventually spreading to places as distant as India. Following a well-trodden historical path, Casey briefly outlines how such gardens changed over time. During the Christian Middle Ages, for example, though still walled, gardens took on the "practical function" of sustaining monasteries and nunneries. With the advent of the

---

[48] On feminist standpoint theory see Donna Haraway's "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn, 1988): 575-599; and Kim TallBear's "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry" (Research Note), *Journal of Research Practice* 10, no. 2 (2014): Article N17.

[49] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 589.

[50] Edward S. Casey, *The World on Edge* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2017), xv, xiii.

[51] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 186.

public park in western Europe and the United States during the modern era, gardens were wholly rethought.[52] According to Casey, the transformation of walled, usually private gardens into public parklands marked a paradigm shift from the inaccessibility of the cultivated walled garden toward civic sensibilities of shared use and intermingling—a move from enclosed to open spaces.[53]

Erin Despard and Monika Kin Gagnon write, "if a garden encloses, it also excludes."[54] Parks enclose and exclude, too. They are not always as equally accessed or used as Casey's definition might imply. Take, for example, the events of May 25, 2020. In Minneapolis, police officers murdered George Floyd. On the same day, in New York's Central Park, a white woman named Amy Cooper called 911 on a black man who asked that she leash her dog according to bylaw. The man, Christian Cooper (no relation to Ms. Cooper), recorded the incident on his phone. It was shared widely on social media as the "Central Park Birdwatching Incident."[55] In June 2020, in my own "backyard" so to speak, unhoused Vancouver residents set up camp in Strathcona Park despite protests from wealthy homeowners. In part an effort by individuals to better secure space for pandemic-related physical distancing, the tent city is more significantly the result of city-wide housing policies—an affordability crisis compounded by poisoned drug supply and a years-long overdose epidemic.[56] During drawn out efforts to dismantle the tent city and relocate residents to shelters and, later, low-income housing, the Parks Board erected a red metal fence along the encampment's edge. The barrier separates areas marked for remediation (to be returned to more acceptable uses) from the patch where campers will remain while emergency shelters are readied. All of which to say that while urban parks purport to offer equal access, not all uses are readily accepted. Parks are policed. They are not free from prejudicial and violent encounters.

Nonetheless, despite any too-rosy vision of park accessibility and use, I am intrigued by Casey's effort to theorize gardens and parks as continuous, rather than

---

[52] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 187.

[53] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 187.

[54] Erin Despard and Monika Kin Gagnon, "Introduction," *Public* 41 (2010): 8.

[55] Sarah Maslin Nir, "How 2 Lives Collided in Central Park, Rattling the Nation," *New York Times*, June 14, 2020; updated Oct. 14, 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/06/14/nyregion/central-park-amy-cooper-christian-racism.html.

[56] Jen St. Denis, "Tent Cities Aren't Going Away. Why Not Provide Sanctioned Sites?," *Tyee*, Aug. 7, 2020, https://thetyee.ca/News/2020/08/07/Tent-Cities-Sanctioned-Sites/.

distinct urban sites or “natural” forms. His historical overview allows for connections and continuities between sites so often grouped together as “natural” spaces of contemporary life. On the other hand, gardens and parks are readily separated according to cultural shapings around ownership, labour, responsible use, and enjoyment. Perhaps different kinds of social gatherings are or are not allowed within their bounds. (As to this point, Chapter 2 pays greater attention to the concepts and tropes that nuance how parks and gardens are encountered as continuous or distinct.) It needs saying that Casey’s account, leading from ancient Persian gardens to Central Park, bypasses a well-known garden type: front and backyards. Casey’s interest in edges, however, implicates front and back gardens too, if not explicitly. Yards are likewise known through edges: sidewalks or roadsides abutting the lawn’s edge; a fence or hedge that keeps gardens and neighbours separate; or rows of rock outlining a flower bed. Indeed, according to landscape historian John Dixon Hunt, a garden is most often distinguished from and by the “adjacent territories in which it is set.” Gardens often have precise boundaries. They are also set apart by “design and internal organization.”[57] It could be said that gardens are recognized first and foremost by their own containment, the edges with which they are sequestered, and only later by the flora and features they contain.

Noting the difference between “wild” and “artifactual” or human-made edges, Casey insists on attending to edges and how they differentially demarcate places, objects, concepts, events, and bodies. Such attention makes obvious how entangled these many edges are in the makeup of the world. What we might see as an “uncompromised natural formation,” he writes, is in fact “deeply compromised given the environmental, historical, and cultural worlds” in which it is formed. Worlds “overlap and interpenetrate at many points.”[58] Paying attention to edges, in this way, gets around oppositional ways of thinking that divide the world into clean categories of wild and artifactual or natural and cultural. As Natasha Myers notes, “within the space of a garden enclosure, what counts as nature and what counts as culture are very much in the making.”[59] The closer one looks, the murkier these concepts become.

---

[57] John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 15.

[58] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 113.

[59] Myers, “From Edenic Apocalypse,” 126.

Here, in my first turn about the garden (considering its historical, social, and ecological edges), I ask a not altogether benign question: Where does a garden begin? Where does it end? Casey asks this of landscapes, of course. But unlike gardens or parks, the landscape is a tangle of almost entirely wild edges. A landscape, he concludes, "*cannot be built*, much less manufactured: it can only be experienced, undergone—or ruined."[60] The garden, however, is very much a labour: of digging, transplanting, watering, caring. Sometimes, a labour of love or artful composition. Asking about a garden's beginnings leads to other questions. What are its origins? Where is it located? How is it boundaried? What of the provenance of its caretakers or vegetal life? What practices are employed? Let's look at a garden.

Figure 2. The back corner of my parents' backyard. Victoria (Esquimalt and Songhees territories). May 2017. Photo by author.

[60] Casey, *The World on Edge*, 180. Emphasis in original.

1.2. In My Parents' Garden

The above photograph (Fig. 2) was taken near an edge—more precisely the meeting of two. It shows the back corner of my parents' semi-urban backyard. On the right-hand side, peeking from behind the planting, the top strut of a bamboo fence protrudes. On the left in the foreground, a grassy pathway begins. Pots sit on either side of the path, brimming with early spring blooms: purple pansies, thyme, and the tender shoots of perennial grasses. Though I snapped the photograph in May, the garden's beds already look full and overgrown. The row of stones marking the path's edge is indiscernible beneath the dense foliage. Lilies and the spindly trunk of a paper birch rise upward. Toward the background, an old wooden ladder rests against an apple tree, not yet fruit-laden. A rather common red glass hummingbird feeder hangs off one of the branches. Despite its charms, this is the most forgotten spot, less tended to than the rest and often overgrown. Hidden from view by more prominent beds, the grassy path leads to the garden's work area: a storage shed and composting piles. In the opposite direction, out of the photo's frame, the path leads to a sitting area. A slate patio opens to the sky above and is surrounded, in summer, by flowering perennials. But, back to the forgotten corner. In the winter, it floods (and often the neighbour's adjoining yard, too) as runoff overflows the street's storm drain, finding its way to this lowest point. It is a marshy reminder that the land has a shape of its own—older than the residential neighbourhood's rigid lay. I love this back corner, its overgrown inattention. Precisely because it appears so overlooked, it is indicative of my parents' gardening sensibility: abundance over restraint, contrast over uniformity, a keen sense that gardens are for experimentation, a site to try things out over and again with greater or lesser success.

This is the garden in which I grew up, replete with textures, an array of greens, whorls of leaves, and tree shadows. My parents' garden was then, like now, a maze of low-hanging branches—the old apple tree's, included. Impossible to take a turn in without having to duck. You might brush up against a fern's graceful spill or find yourself stepping lightly around plants disinterested in staying put in their beds. Biologist Barbara McClintock, whose once-neglected work on gene transposition in corn plants earned a Nobel prize, notes that even faced with edges, plants "move around a great deal." With keen attention and a lot of patience, one might notice "tulip leaves, if it's a little warm,

turn themselves around so their backs are toward the sun."[61] In search of sunlight, a trellis or branch to grip, or room to grow, sweet peas, pole beans, and other flowering climbers likewise send out tendrils. "If a non-communicative, vegetative art exists, we must rethink the very elements of our science, and learn a whole new set of techniques"—so says Ursula K. Le Guin's President of the Therolinguistics Association. In "The Author of the Acacia Seeds," Le Guin concocts therolinguistics as the study of plant and animal languages. Imagining that future scholars might scoff at her era's ignorance, the president laughs to herself: "Do you realize that they couldn't even read Eggplant?"[62] Humour aside, this science-fictionalized account pairs well with what McClintock wrote in a more factual setting.

My parents' garden was my first education in reading and listening for the lives of plants and other critters. It is where I came to realize that the edges of human and other are less than well-defined—perhaps another kind of science fiction. Like the photograph suggests, my parents' garden is not one of hard edges. It pushes at established residential boundaries: trees towering over neighbouring houses, bushes poking through gaps into adjoining yards, hostas and grasses growing one into the other, all the chatter of everything reaching for more space. Even the most neatly-trimmed hedges refused to hold the line, eventually disappearing into plant life on all sides. Over time, my mother's irritation grew alongside the trees she and my father had planted—thick foliage responsible for the ever-shrinking rays of sun in which to bask. So, they built a deck. (A solution soon to be outgrown by skyward-reaching trees.) My mother and many of the plants slowly adapted. Those that stuck around came to flourish in increasingly shaded surrounds. My brothers and I did too.

In my parents' backyard, we learned firsthand of the work of caring for gardens. First, the obvious tasks: digging, cutting, watering, planting. We were frequently put to work. Scrambling up trees to saw at a dead branch, raking leaves, or turning over compost piles. These childhood chores accomplished with more or less enthusiasm. Our garden education moved with our moods, urged on by the comparative attractiveness of

---

[61] Evelyn Fox Keller, *A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1983), 200.

[62] Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Author of the Acacia Seeds," in *The Unreal and the Real: Selected Stories of Ursula K. Le Guin, Vol. Two: Outer Space, Inner Lands* (Easthampton: Small Beer Press, 2012), 271-272.

various tasks at hand or whether something altogether more fun was on option. It is not just that we learned how to keep a garden. By doing chores, tending to a place, we learned specificities of place: the robins and squirrels who frequented, where ferns, mosses, and lilies liked to grow—and who declined to grow at all. Commenting on gardening's educational potential, Kai Wood Mah notes that a "world of experience is bound together by a garden." As "social, political, productive, and aesthetic spaces," gardens help to "integrate young people into social life." They offer "unlimited opportunities for hands-on learning and collaborative work."[63] This educational potential exists in a wide range of gardens: from backyards to public parks, schoolyard plots or community gardens, botanical gardens and patio pots. Thinking practically with Mah, attentionally with McClintock, and speculatively with Le Guin allows me to see my parents' garden as an education in the lifeways of plants. In offering care in the semi-controlled space of the garden, I first sensed what it might mean to inhabit a world populated by other-than-human agencies, needs, meanings, and desires. Yes, such a sensibility can be formalized in school settings. But learning takes place informally in gardens, too.

1.3. Tending to Places and Peoples

In my parents' garden we did yard work. But we also learned "the labour of attending" to place and its inhabitants.[64] For Daniel Coleman, the yard and its tending allow for opportunities to rethink relationships with the natural world in an age of political upheaval, social divisions, intensifying ecological devastation, and climate change. Coleman's work gives conceptual and theoretical shape to my project as a "biography of an urban place" (the subtitle of his book). Employing conventions of history, cultural geography, and place studies, Coleman also attunes to ethical, political, and intellectual stakes made evident by Indigenous scholars. As McClintock did through ethnobotany, Coleman makes a case for careful attention when making claims about the lifeways of human and nonhuman others. Anna Tsing and Coleman make good accomplices too. Coleman's practice is not dissimilar to Tsing's "arts of noticing"—though their objects are

[63] Kai Wood Mah, "Young Gardeners: On Gardens as Spaces of Experiential Pedagogy," *Public* 41 (2010): 99-100.

[64] Daniel Coleman, *Yardwork: A Biography of an Urban Place* (Hamilton: James Street North Books, 2017), 12.

vastly different.[65] Whereas Tsing's terrain is the forest floor (where she hunts for matsutake mushrooms below gangling tanoak or between rotting stumps of Douglas fir), Coleman's project is more edged-in, bounded by the fence lines of his front and backyards (on a property atop the stony escarpments of Hamilton, Ontario in the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee Nations). Concluding his work, he writes:

> Telling the life of this one place . . . is a way of reanimating the way we imagine place—this place, any place. What needs reanimating isn't nature, isn't the life going on in this yard, with the mandibles eating our grassroots, the beaks finding nourishment in the cracks and fissures we don't even know are there. What needs reanimating is our ability to see, to perceive what's already going on, to hear what's already being said.[66]

Coleman's work, as such, asks that we attend to the living constituents of Indigenous territories. Like plants, people move—and the "we" that makes up a place needs careful theorization. Unlike its lively nonhuman conclusion, Coleman's text starts with a brief autobiography. He describes a child of Christian missionaries who finds his way back to Canada (first the prairies, then to Hamilton in pursuit of work) after a childhood spent abroad. The story is characterized by movement. Movement, likewise, gives conceptual shape to his "we," as he describes "people-who-move, migrants and the children of migrants."[67] In centring movement, Coleman invokes a range of historical and present migrations critical to how places are composed and related to. The history and conditions of such movements shape present-day obligations to the Indigenous peoples whose lands we occupy and call home.

Like all categories, "people-who-move" is imperfect. It lacks the sharpened political teeth of terms like colonizer or settler. But through attention to specific migrations, "people-who-move" side steps generalizations inherent to a broader term like "settler"—especially when "settler" is misused as an identity category rather than employed as an analytic of "relationships to colonialism, anticolonialism, and specific lands and places."[68] Daniel Heath Justice notes that important critiques have been made

---

[65] Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, 19.

[66] Coleman, *Yardwork*, 237.

[67] Coleman, *Yardwork*, 30.

[68] Troy Storfjell (@storfjta), "Indigeneity is an analytic, not an identity. Sámi is an identity. Kanaka Maoli is an identity. Lakota and Anishinabe and Puyallup are identities. Indigeneity describes a

of the term “settler” for its conflation of “willing immigration with forcible transport through the trans-Atlantic slave trade or the flight of refugees from brutal conditions.” He goes on to conclude, however, that such critiques often betray the speaker’s desire to adjudicate who settlers “really are or were” while maintaining distance from “violent histories and continuing practices of settler colonialism.”[69]

“People-who-move,” then, is better understood as a complement to what la paperson calls the “setter-native-slave triad”: a “patterning of social relations . . . shaped by colonialism’s thirst for land.”[70] This triad is a “figurative shorthand” describing “relations of power with respect to land.” While any of the three terms might be read as an identity, instead each represents an entangled site of “exception that reveal[s] the underlying logic of settler colonial power.”[71] What Coleman's term affords me is a figure through which to chart the specificities of migratory histories and relationships to place within my own family—and the ways such moves allow for or produce possibilities for educational practices like gardening.

1.4. Outside My Parents’ Garden

In another yard, on an island a continent away from Coleman’s yard, on lands swept salty by winds off the Salish Sea, I wonder how to employ the biographical methods I learned from reading his text. How might I give an account of my parents’ small garden in the coastal city of Victoria, BC? Here, settler colonialism is made material throughout the city’s built realm. In a place celebrated nationally as a “city of gardens,” my parents’ is just one among many. The so-called garden city has tied its

---

certain set of relationships to colonialism, anticolonialism and specific lands and places.,” Twitter, January 19, 2021, https://twitter.com/storfjta/status/1351770335851364352.

[69] Daniel Heath Justice, *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2018), 10.

[70] See also, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang who write that “although the setter-native-slave triad structures settler colonialism, this does not mean that settler, native, and slave are analogs that can be used to describe corresponding identities, structural locations, worldviews, and behaviors. Nor do they mutually constitute one another. For example, Indigenous is an identity independent of the triad, and also an ascribed structural location within the triad. Chattel slave is an ascribed structural position, but not an identity. Settler describes a set of behaviors, as well as a structural location, but is eschewed as an identity.” (Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 1, no. 1 [2012]: 7 n.7.)

[71] la paperson, *A Third University is Possible* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 7-9.

economic success to tourism. Its self-image relies on the vast manicured lawns fronting the Provincial Legislature buildings and the Empress Hotel or the lavish gardens at Butchart and Abkhazi—all the while expelling raw sewage into the Strait of Juan de Fuca.[72]

It is a city of stark juxtapositions. Alongside its west coast environmentalisms, its imperial histories are on full display with infrastructural, horticultural, and memorial markings. Across from the Empress Hotel's grand lawns, for example, once stood a monument to the British explorer, James Cook (1728-1779). On July 1 of 2021, the statue was torn down and thrown into the Inner Harbour waters. Spurred on by the Tk'emlups te Secwépemc First Nation's discovery of the remains of 215 Indigenous children at the site of a former Indian Residential School, Canada Day protests took place nationwide. From atop its granite podium, the bronze statue once faced inland, as if still standing at the helm of the *HMS Resolution*: gazing, charting, claiming. The bend of Cook's elbow held rolled-up charts. His other hand held a compass. "Maps conceptualized unfamiliar space in Eurocentric terms," writes geographer Cole Harris, "situating it within a culture of vision, measurement, and management." Day after day, the statue surveyed the city, reorganizing the landscape into a geographic imaginary that "ignored Indigenous ways of knowing and recording space"—knowledges that settlers would cast aside in favour of their own maps.[73]

My parents' house is near where this statue once stood. Now intermixed with refurbished wartime-era workers' cottages, numerous aging low-rise apartment blocks, and the city's once-tallest residential tower, the neighbourhood is home to some of the oldest heritage houses in Victoria. Gardens here spill out from behind property lines onto street boulevards. They range from formal to farm-like. They are overgrown, drying out, and full of island quirks: driftwood fences, beach glass mosaics, and plaster figurines. They front harbour-side hotels and line narrow seaside paths. The neighbourhood is

---

[72] In 2020, the city opened the McLoughlin Point Wastewater Treatment Plant in Esquimalt—a full 125 years after it began to dump sewage into the Strait of Juan de Fuca in 1894. (Lindsay Kines, "'I was Wondering Why the Water Looked So Clean': CRD's Sewage Treatment Plant Up and Running," *Times Colonist*, Dec. 15, 2020, www.timescolonist.com/news/local/i-was-wondering-why-the-water-looked-so-clean-crd-s-sewage-treatment-plant-up-and-running-1.24255805.)

[73] Cole Harris, "How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94, no. 1 (2004): 175, DOI: 10.1111/ j.1467-8306.2004.09401009.x.

known as James Bay, after the shallow waters it surrounds. The Bay's namesake is Sir James Douglas (1803-1877), a fur trader, first governor of the colony of Vancouver Island, second governor of the colony of British Columbia, and signatory of southern Vancouver Island treaties. Upon seeing the vast food meadows surrounding nearby míqən (today also known as Beacon Hill), Douglas wrote:

> the place itself appears a perfect "Eden" in the midst of the dreary wilderness of the North west coast, and so different is its general aspect from the wooded, rugged regions around that one might be pardoned for supposing it had dropped from the clouds into its present position.[74]

A biblical allusion to give conceptual shape to a landscape that was, to Douglas, alien. For these colonial involvements, poet and author Wayde Compton writes, "Douglas is often referred to as 'the father of British Columbia.'"[75]

At the island's southernmost tip, Dallas Road is only blocks from my parents' house. Here, the road twists and turns atop the island's craggy ledge where the land drops to meet the sea. Across the strait rises the Olympic mountain range and Washington state beyond. These waters mark an international border: the edge of two nations. Tankers sail back and forth through their currents, headed to Vancouver and Seattle ports. At the nearby breakwater, Alaskan cruise ships dock during summer months. Contoured by a low tangle of shrubs, swarthy Nootka rose, and hardhack, a popular walking path runs truer to the actual coastline. The paved path follows the ragged edge of the land's centuries-long erosion. In the opposite direction, a sign marks the TransCanada highway's end: "Mile 0." But, really, it is a start—pointing toward its terminus, Ottawa, and to parliamentary authority. In every direction, this place is made intelligible through acts of memorialization and naming, in infrastructure projects or via the architecture of parliamentary and legislative powers, and through particular ways of sculpting land into lawns, gardens, and seaside paths. These are the now-urban territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən People, today known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations.

How to put all this together? To think the colonial mapping of this particular place and its edges—whether they be the national borders, a roadside path, a lawn or garden.

---

[74] Quoted in Matt Cavers, "'Victoria's Own Oak Tree': A Brief Cultural History of Victoria's Garry Oaks after 1843," *BC Studies* no. 163 (Autumn 2009): 69.

[75] Wade Compton, *Bluesprint: Black British Columbian Literature and Orature* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2001), 309.

Edges are more than a set of boundaries. They are a “formative force of their own,” as Casey writes. What to make of this force? Of how edges push or draw us, stabilizing or rearranging values. Edges are orienting devices. They not only delimit a place, form, or concept with regard to the next, but instruct ways of living in accordance with such configurations.

A hedge does not merely mark a line between neighbours. It materializes ideas of privacy and property rights. It straightens certain formations of family life: respectability, domesticity. It renders individuals in or out of place. A hedge can be a habitat for urban wildlife. But it can also exclude, keeping out human and other strangers. Like hedges, roads and paths order everyday life into the strictures of colonial sovereignty in more and less mundane ways. The edges of a sidewalk or garden path instruct us on which direction to walk: here, not there. Over time, walking such paths becomes habitual—and so too does what they exclude or draw attention to. As Sara Ahmed writes “our investments in specific routes can be hidden from view, as they are the point from which we view the world that surrounds us. We can get directed by losing our sense of this direction. The line becomes then simply a way of life, or even an expression of who we are.”[76] Lines and orientations are crucial to Ahmed's queer phenomenology: a formulation that considers the bodily and affective experiences of losing one’s bearings. Or of having one’s bearings be out of line with how the world is already oriented to (and for) certain bodies. It is not just the built environment that orients us—ways of life track along genealogies, lines of inheritance, too.

1.5. Inheritances

From my parents, I inherited what some refer to as a “green thumb,” a certain knack for gardening. The thumb is an empty referent, though. It is the plants themselves—the beauty of the flower or the verdancy of the garden—and not the colour of the skin that proves the thumb green. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “green thumb” first appeared in print in 1937: “He is, I think, the ‘green-thumbed’ type of gardener, who has lived and loved his flowers and has learned from them and from the

[76] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 19.

soil."[77] Here, the green thumb is not only a caregiver, but also a student learning from the task of caring for plants—formed in practice and through sustained work with flowers and soil. Packed into the idiom is a sense of the gardener's skill and intuition (verging on the magical). It encompasses an understanding of the care and love that the gardener develops toward plants. In short, it indexes the relationship, experience, and knowledge a gardener holds.

My parents' green thumbs were inherited from my Omas and Opas, each one sprung from the nutrient-rich farmlands of the Netherlands. Both sets of grandparents came to Canada shortly after the Second World War. Despite hailing from opposite ends of the small country, both families found their way to Red Deer. The Albertan city straddles the boundaries of Treaties 6 and 7 territories. My mom's parents settled into their new home as potato farmers on a lot that, at the time of purchase, was far outside city limits. My dad's parents' property borders a lush gully. When city workers felled all the trees, my Opa planted new ones. Farming and gardening runs in the family. Migrations have marked our three generations of family. In Coleman's terminology, we are people-who-move. And our relationships to land and place have been upturned with each successive move. My Omas and Opas left lowlands once washed by the tidal waters of the North and South Seas for the hard expanse of prairie lands absent of seawater for 60 million years.[78] My parents left the tall grasses and wide skies of Alberta for the coniferous outcroppings of Vancouver Island. I left the island for the city. My grandparents lived with acres. My parents, with front and backyards. I, with a small area set aside from my landlord's property.

These migrations are not innocent. They carry in tow conceptions of land, expectations of access, and notions of "proper" use. The Dutch joke that "if God made the earth, it was the Dutch who made the Netherlands." Coming from a line of people who "made" land makes me cautious about how gardens might be conscripted into gardening regimes that see lands and waters as objects requiring control—rather than

[77] *Oxford English Dictionary* online, 3rd ed (March 2022), s.v. "green thumb," accessed April 18, 2022, https://www-oed-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/view/Entry/81167?redirectedFrom=green+thumb#eid2427585.

[78] Elsa Panciroli, "A glimpse of when Canada's badlands were a lush dinosaur forest by the sea," *Guardian*, 27 September 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/sep/27/a-glimpse-of-when-canadas-badlands-were-a-lush-dinosaur-forest-by-the-sea.

as subjects with whom we might be in relation. These are learned understandings and ways of relating to the earth.

Figure 3. “Smart Farming,” *Dissident Gardens*. Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam. April 2018. Photo by author.

Take, for example, the opening lines of the catalogue accompanying a 2018 exhibition I visited when last in Rotterdam. “Dissident Gardens” at Het Nieuwe Instituut consisted of four main installations. A billboard atop a large pile of lava rock advertising life on an imagined terraformed Mars-scape. A high-tech greenhouse under the glow of fluorescent pink ultraviolet lighting: the future of automated farming (Fig. 3). A display of maps for “pleasure parks,” semi-rural but highly designed “natural” sites for camping and lodging across the Netherlands. And a collection of contemporary objects made from living materials like mycelium fungi or seaweed. The catalogue reads: “Many landscapes have been designed and are the direct result of human action. The Netherlands is a global leader when it comes to productive landscapes. It is our ultimate (export) product

of imagination and control."[79] While the Dutch continually rank among the largest agricultural exporters in the world, here the claim to fame is not riches pulled from the soil—but one based in architectural, infrastructural, and design-based prowess. An ethic that renders land as workable is exported in every box of tomatoes, every bouquet of tulips. If this is dissidence, I wonder what compliance is?

If ways of relating to the natural world can be exported or, indeed, inherited, then we will have to find ways of disinheriting or unlearning assumptions about human relations with the land, its nonhuman inhabitants, and elemental forces. Far from a disavowal or "move to innocence,"[80] this process requires an honest reckoning with the cultural, political, and emotional inheritances by which we orient ourselves toward the world. This might not be all bad. It was my own family inheritances, after all, that first turned me toward gardening and kindled the concerns that energize this thesis. "We stay being whatever we came from," writes Alexis Pauline Gumbs.[81] Similarly, Haraway calls this "staying with the trouble": a radical commitment to the present as the time and space from which to rethink and reorganize ways of living and relating while cultivating more expansive kinships between humans and nonhuman others. This requires "learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as moral critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings."[82] The collective challenges we now face require reckoning with where we come from, but also an understanding of what presently gives shape to our lives and how we might live together. Or, as Rinaldo Walcott puts it: "we must recognize that how we presently live together was learned over hundreds of years, which means that it can be unlearned. We can learn new things, new ways of co-exisiting."[83] All of which to say, gardening—as a way of relating to the more-than-human—is not innocent of the histories that have configured the world as it is. Not all gardens are created equal. Many have played a violent role in colonial land grabs,

---

[79] *Dissident Gardens*, curated by Hetty Berens et al. (Rotterdam: Het Nieuwe Instituut, 2018), exhibition catalogue, https://dissidentgardens.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en.

[80] Tuck and Yang describe "settler moves to innocence" as "those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege." (Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," 10.)

[81] Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *M Archive: After the End of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 18.

[82] Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 1.

[83] Rinaldo Walcott, *On Property* (Windsor: Biblioasis, 2021), 95-96.

genocide, and slavery.[84] Even as a place that opportunes learning, gardens cannot be thought separate from the histories and policies that have given them shape.

I doubt my immigrant story is very unique. With minor variations, it is probably rather common for any white Canadian. But it helps me to think gardens—or farms, or parks—and my own attachments to them as part of a cultural archive. Working off Edward Said's initiating concept, Gloria Wekker writes that the cultural archive is "located in the way we think, do things, and look at the world . . . in how our affective and rational economies are organized and intertwined . . . it is between our ears and in our hearts and souls."[85] While Wekker's project is on race and racism in the Netherlands, I think it is applicable here. The shape a garden takes is not only a matter of municipal bylaw, notions of private versus public property, or based on touristic appeal. The shape we think it *ought to take*, how gardens figure into our lives as personally meaningful, matters. Relating to gardens and the natural world at large is charged with emotion. Our lives happen in places—whether we acknowledge the *place* of place or not. As Ahmed writes:

> If we think about inheritance as history, and as what we receive from others, then we can reconsider the biological as well as social aspects of inheritance: the body takes the shape of its history. Both biological and social inheritance would be described not as simply lines that we follow, but as the contingency of contact, where things coming into contact with other things shapes what we receive. So histories might be just as much about the skin, physiology, and blood as they are about styles, words, clothes, and technologies. History does not reside within such materials, but instead shapes how they arrive in the forms that they do, which is also about what they come into contact with.[86]

What we do or do not come into contact with can be the outcome of an edge, a hedge, or a path. The edges of our gardens are more than just lines on a map. They are radical restructurings of ways of living with the nonhuman world. They establish ideas of property rights and value. They define right and wrong ways of being in relation. They stage evaluations of the kinds of nature that matter. We learn from edges. Once learned, enclosures often fade from view, become habitual. If the garden is to be more than

---

[84] Ros Gray and Suela Sheikh, "The Coloniality of Planting," *Architectural Review* no. 1478 (February 2021): 15.

[85] Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 19.

[86] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, n.8 196-197. Emphasis mine.

simply a space of retreat, we will need to account for how it is circumscribed as a particular kind of natural space. Moreover, if we are to broaden our understanding and craft new conceptualizations of what a garden can do, we might start by paying attention both to what its walls materially foreclose and to genres of writing that give conceptual shape to the world as "natural," "wild," or "devastated." Not so as to further entrench the authority of these forms and categories, but with a commitment to undoing violence and a hope for other ways of being in relation. As Casey writes, "where and when edges harden and sharpen, people gather, resistance is generated, creativity is sparked, and new ways of being with one another emerge."[87] What new ways of being in relation with one another might come about from uprooting a hedge? From deviating from the prescribed path? Or in composing alternative drafts of what we today call "natural"? What other ways might we practice gardening?

1.6. What's Next

With an eye set to the ways in which our lives are bound up in the geographical, architectural, and horticultural ordering of plants, gardens, and their designs, my focus in this first chapter has been on the garden as a material, enclosed space. In the next chapter, I turn my attention to the definitions and tropes that give meaning to our concepts of what is variously called a "garden." My intent is not to tease out contradictions or misalignments between competing versions of "nature" and their use with regard to the nature of gardens. Neither is it to make a comparison of Indigenous and non-Indigenous conceptualizations of land versus nature—in hopes of some better definition. Rather, I am spurred on by Wekker's cultural archive as method. What economies of affect and knowledge, ways of thinking and doing, or genres of writing give meaning to the garden and inform our attachments to its myriad forms? In a time of increasing climatic instability and ecological disruption, it can be easy to fall into old habits of assigning goods and bads: pollinator-friendly good, lawn bad. Rewilded good, manicured bad. There are certainly merits to evaluating how something like a garden is designed. But for whom and under what conditions? These are questions that educators working in environmental or place-based education might ask of their pedagogies and curricula. Our relationships to natural spaces are complex and personally-felt. As Isis

[87] Casey, *The World on Edge*, xxi.

Brook notes, peoples' relationships to places are often made "through plants" with "emotional connections" that are quite powerful whether or not they align with garden designs that are today considered ecologically-sound or make sense in particular climates.[88]

This is not to equivocate between better and worse ways of caring for gardens or to stipulate which garden types are worthy of practical, critical, or educational attention. But the "ecologically-sound" should not trump concerns of accessibility or class, or the dynamics of race, gender, or sexuality. What is considered "environmentally-friendly" can so often be expensive to implement, out-of-reach altogether, or in conflict with other ways of knowing and relating to the natural world. Pollinator plantings in expensive botanical gardens, for example, do little to upend unjust class or labour relations. Sometimes, absent of state or community support, a park needs to be a tent city. In line with la paperson's ghetto land pedagogy, we might inquire of the gardening practices and garden types that can or do already sustain communities—whether or not they align with the visions and concerns of settler environmentalists. At the outset of this thesis, I offered David Orr's remarks on the relationship between environmental education and education more generally. He writes, "all education is environmental education." This is only true, however, if "environmental education" meets the demands of *all* that is meant when we say "all." This is a clumsy turning around of Orr's dictum. Concerns relating to the environment—and our pedagogies surrounding it—must also include that which exceeds any uncomplicated understanding of nature: the urban, the ruined, the unnatural. In the following chapter, I hope to trace out some of the conceptualizations of nature and place that are often invoked to describe gardens (or against which they are described) so as to complicate our understanding of gardens and the worlds they make.

---

[88] Brook uses a personal anecdote to make this point. While on holiday in Greece, Brook found herself unreasonably happy to find a small patch of lawn to lay down upon after days in the hot sun. The lawn, she knows, is an "ecological absurdity" in Greece (and home in England); it "doesn't fit the culture or climate." And yet, she finds herself rejuvenated by it. She concludes that she "wasn't thinking about it, [she] was responding emotionally to it." (Isis Brook, "Making Here Like There: Place Attachment, Displacement and the Urge to Garden," *Ethics, Place and Environment* 6, no. 3 [2013]: 231-232, DOI: 10.1080/1366879042000200651.)

Chapter 2. The Garden Defined

This second chapter is concerned with how definitions and concepts of "the natural" and of land and its qualities are put to use in the discussion of gardens—how they inform what we understand a garden to be. While the first chapter was concerned with the garden as a physical space, this chapter pays attention to how it is described. What words or pictures are used? What sources are drawn upon, written or otherwise? Some of the terms that resource the work of this chapter include, "Native plants," "wilderness," and "re-wilding," among others. But I do not engage in a close study of each term. Rather, I write in a narrative form to demonstrate how concepts are used interchangeably, in conjunction, or against one another to describe gardens across times and sites. Our descriptions of gardens are inflected by the materiality of gardens and how we work them, linger in them, or remember them. Both the material and discursive are included in the definition of education I employ: an undertaking of collective world-making.[89] Whose knowledges or practices are foregrounded or excluded when we talk about gardens or imagine who or what we can learn from when gardening or spending time in the garden?

2.1. The Place of Gardens

I arrive in the garden as a space of learning by way of a question: How do we come to know a place? Places are "as much a part of us as we are of them," affirms Keith Basso in *Wisdom Sits in Places* (the culmination of roughly forty years of anthropological work with the Western Apache community of Cibecue, Arizona).[90] Places are not simply "what's around." They are imbued with history and with cultural and personal meanings. We make and are made by place, just as their unmaking is our own. Gardens so clearly bear the marks of intervention. Fencing, trimming, transplanting, sowing, watering: each of these undertakings makes a change in the world. Each says something about what is given value in the garden, whether measured against ideas of beauty, sustainability, or other rubrics of cultural value. Taken together, these tasks add up to a definition of "gardening"—one underwritten by agricultural,

---

[89] Snaza and Singh, "Dehumanist Education," 9.

[90] Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), xiv.

botanical, and horticultural values and knowledges. But they also *make* the world. This is the premise of science studies scholar John Law's performative metaphysics: "practices enact realities."[91]

As a practice, gardening's medium is plant life, it is done with cultivars and native species of plants found in nature, after all. But "unnatural" things like fences make up gardens, too—even though adherents to a more pristine understanding of nature might dismiss features of the urban. But, as Daniel Coleman writes, what "needs reanimating isn't nature." Instead, we might hone "our ability to see, to perceive what's already going on, to hear what's already being said."[92] Gardens embody the messiness of "what's already going on": they are both natural and cultural. In linking gardening to the urban, I do not mean to set up a geographically-ordered binary whereby gardens are features of the urban, while "the natural" is relegated to the periphery, the rural, or the wilderness. Gardens can and do grow in all sorts of more and less urban locales. They occupy places that might be thought of as wild.[93]

As a concept, "place" has been studied by philosophers, historians, anthropologists, geographers, and artists—all of whom have stakes in defining what place *is*. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan writes: "place incarnates the experiences and aspirations of a people." It is a reality to be "clarified and understood from the perspective of the people who have given it meaning."[94] When approaching the garden, we might center who or what gives it meaning as a place. Further, we might attend to the obligations, commitments, and values that are made material. Consider the infrastructures gardens entail; the place of a garden can involve global systems of trade, international producers of pesticides and herbicides, or local commercial plant growers. A garden might rely on legal definitions of private property or the institutions that see to their enforcement. In proposing gardens as a site of learning, I hope to reckon with how these values are repeated in practice and by the sensorial or affective experiences that

---

[91] John Law, "What's Wrong with a One-World World," *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 16, no. 1 (2015): 129, DOI: 10.1080/1600910X.2015.1020066.

[92] Coleman, *Yardwork*, 237.

[93] For a recent discussion on "forest gardens," see Chelsey Geralda Armstrong et al., "Historical Indigenous Land-Use Explains Plant Functional Trait Diversity," *Ecology and Society* 26, no. 2 (2021): n.p., DOI: 10.5751/ES-12322-260206.

[94] Yi-Fu Tuan, "Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective," *Progress in Geography* 6 (1974): 213.

gardens make possible. Natasha Myers puts it like this, “if gardens are also *worlding projects*, we can ask, not only what worlds are we cultivating in our gardens, but also, what worlds are our gardens designed to reproduce?”[95] If we wish to challenge the meanings and values that gardens repeat and attend more carefully to multispecies relationships, might we practice gardening otherwise and bring about different worlds?

Place is a much rangier concept than garden—bringing up questions of scale. No doubt, gardens are places of a particular kind, brimming with histories, invested with meanings, and shaped by plant life, gardeners, and visitors. But perhaps “place” directs our thinking outward, evoking writing or artwork that captures larger landscapes and broader categories of nature (like the rural wilderness) or the urban (like the metropolis or wasteland). Given that practices, places, and the meanings they generate are so varied, what makes a garden? How is it distinguished from less manicured and domesticated forms of the natural?

2.2. Gardens as a Staging of Relations

As Chapter 1 demonstrated, the material edges of gardens matter. Having looked to hedges, paths, and other garden perimeters, I now turn to the conceptual edges of the garden. Myers broadly defines gardens as “sites where people *stage their relationships with plants*.”[96] Gardens are simply a staging of multispecies relations. I like the ease of Myers’ definition. By focusing on relationality over composition or geographical situation, the definition qualifies not only civic and institutional botanical gardens, front and backyards, and community gardens on abandoned lots—but also seed-bombed boulevards, clusters of pots on high rise patios, or even a lone pot on a bright window ledge. What is possible in each of these “gardens” varies. The kinds of relationships they stage depend on municipal regulations, aesthetic preferences, the proximity or friendliness of neighbours, and site-specifics like sun exposure, access to water, and so on.

---

[95] Natasha Myers, “From the Anthropocene to the Planthroposcene: Designing Gardens for Plant/People Involution,” *History and Anthropology* 28, no. 3 (2017): 298, DOI: 10.1080/02757206.2017.1289934. Emphasis in original.

[96] Myers, “From Edenic Apocalypse,” 116. Emphasis in original.

Myers' study provokes my thinking. At the paper's outset, we join her on a city walk through Sydney, Australia, observing through her eyes the different ways in which people "arrange and potentiate relationships with plants in urban spaces."[97] We are asked to picture labour-intensive vertical gardens and also patches of ferns growing freely in a gutter. Are these both gardens, she wonders? Myers' paper builds toward a comparative analysis of the weedy, ecological "installations" of Austrian artist Lois Weinberger and the futuristic botanical mausoleum of Singapore's Gardens by the Bay. She asks what these contrasting "gardens" say about the state of our relationships with the natural world—and how they instruct such relationships. She wonders what worlds they are designed to reproduce and what other kinds of gardens might rework our relationship to the natural world in an unraveling present. Reworking Spinoza's admission that "we do not even know of what a body is capable,"[98] Myers proposes that "we do not yet know what a garden is or what a garden can do."[99] Her formulation allows me to cast a wide definitional net around gardens. Perhaps the weedy and pesticide-ridden edges of a highway, an overgrown vacant lot, or a cared-for but renegade tree growing up through a crack in a back alleyway are also gardens. And if yes, maybe even the rest of the natural world—from beautiful parklands to poisoned wastelands. This is too broad a framing, of course. But I speculate on these possible gardens in earnest. Not to say that everything is a garden, but rather to come at questions of relationship and responsibility from a different angle. A garden as a staging of relations can be described from any manner of relational orientation—no matter how ambivalent or strong. Oppositional terms like "manicured" or "re-wilded" and notions of over- and underuse can be nuanced by sensibilities ranging from care and tenderness all the way to neglect, cruelty, or abandon.

Even more remote conservation areas or parks frequently characterized as wilderness or backcountry work with Myers' definition. As city dwellers, our relationships to these areas depend on the materials, transportation networks, and other infrastructures we rely upon to get to these very places[100]: cars and rubber tires,

---

[97] Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse," 116.

[98] Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York, NY: Zone Books, 1990), 226.

[99] Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse," 116.

[100] For a discussion of the highway and the automobile's paired roles (especially during the twentieth century) in the aesthetic construction of nature and especially of our ability to transport

airplanes and asphalt landing strips, oil and gas. We need tents, backpacks, matches, freeze-dried food, etc. in order to hike, light a fire, stargaze, or greet the morning sun—in other words "being out in nature." I want to be careful not to imply that urban gardens and the wilderness of national parks are experienced in the same way. The stakes of life and death differ one to the other. The Crex Crex Collective reminds me that the wilderness is more than simply a "social construct." It exists in a "material reality." It "lives and has value outside of human interests."[101] But my point is this: say it is summertime, for example. You decide to get out of the city and head to a national park. Flying by in your car, you see only a blur of colour. The gravelled roadsides are lush with wildflowers and grasses. Tall flower stocks of purple lupins. Strings of whitish pearly everlasting. Pale clouds of western yarrow. All intermixed with bursts of yellow: maybe dandelion or St. John's wort. A swaying mix of native and invasive grasses. Thickets of Himalayan blackberry. This flowery border negotiates the boundary between highway and the forested landscape behind. *Lupinus perennis*, *Anaphalis margaritacea*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Hypericum perforatum*, *Rubus armeniacus*—names with significant histories that stage species and worlds. Driving along the highway from the city to the mountains, it is difficult to say exactly where one "staging" ends and another begins.

In large part, this is due to the liveliness of plants and animals themselves. Seeds scatter with a gust of wind or in bird droppings. Rhizomes creep along below the ground. The degree of care such areas receive is far from the attention paid to the perennial border of a household garden. It *is* more wild. But these roadside gardens (if that is what they are) did not take shape by accident. Rather, the mix of species at the highway's edge is an ecological consequence not just of our contemporary lifeways, but also of colonization, industrialization, and ongoing extractive projects. After all, radical environmental and cultural upheavals are still underway in the wake of what Alfred

ourselves through it (via the car), see Stephanie LeMenager's *Living Oil: Petroleum Culture in the American Century*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[101] Crex Crex Collective (I. Hebrides, et al.), *Wild Pedagogies: Touchstones for Re-Negotiating Education and the Environment in the Anthropocene*, eds. Bob Jickling, Sean Blenkinsop, Nora Timmerman, and Michael De Danann Sitka-Sage, (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 25, DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-90176-3.

Crosby calls the “Columbian exchange”: a “trend toward biological homogeneity” across so-called New and Old Worlds set in motion by the arrival of Christopher Columbus.[102]

Take non-native plants, for example. Many of these get their footing after first being bought from a garden nursery to be planted in a residential garden. In municipal parks, like Victoria’s Beacon Hill, some species were planted over a century ago by garden designers intent on reshaping the landscape to “appeal to settler aesthetic tastes, reminding them of their British homeland.”[103] If the plants are cunning, they might take over these landscapes or make their way into other places: roadsides, fields, forest edges. Today, there is no shortage of projects aimed at protecting existing native plant species or of reintroducing them into landscapes—urban and otherwise—where they once flourished. Other projects aim to remove avaricious invasives from existing protected areas. More often than not, such conservation or re-wilding projects involve a mix of both practices: planting and removal. These are important projects. But I point to them in order to examine what they reveal about the labour of keeping so-called “natural” areas natural, not to adjudicate whether or not their goals are worthwhile. Planting and weeding are practices of cultivation, interventions into place that bear the mark of human hands. As Tomaz Mastnak, Julia Elyachar, and Tom Boellstorff write, our sense of the “native plant garden” is underwritten by an imagined “pristine nature.” But such visions are both unrealistic and contradictory: “native plants have always depended on human cultivation.”[104]

This is an important reframing. But it risks sounding as though the relationship between native plants and Indigenous caretakers goes only one way. Just as the plants depended on human cultivation, so too did/do Indigenous peoples depend on plants. Take camas (*Camassia quamash*), for example, or kwetlal in the Lək̓ʷəŋən language. It once grew throughout Beacon Hill Park. Also called míqən (“a place to warm your belly”), the park was once home to vast food meadows shaded by the sprawling, gnarled

---

[102] Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, 30th anniv. ed. (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 3.

[103] Mike Simpson, “The Lekwungen Food System: Novelty, Restoration, and Decolonization,” *The Changing Nature Project* (blog), 2015, https://changingnatureproject.weebly.com/lekwungen-food-systems.html.

[104] Tomaz Mastnak, Julia Elyachar, and Tom Boellstorff, “Botanical Decolonization: Rethinking Native Plants,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32, no. 2 (2014): 375, DOI: 10.1068/d13006p.

reach of Garry oaks—meadows which blushed blue with the spring blooming of kwetlal. Cheryl Bryce (lək̓ʷəŋən) explains that kwetlal was an important food source and trade good of the lək̓ʷəŋən People. Coastal economies depended on the plant and traded it with neighbouring nations up and down the coastline. Kwetlal, Bryce notes, "connects me to my ancestors, to the land, and to future generations." The plant is "part of our family."[105] The food meadows of míqən intermixed food sources. They were carefully managed through controlled burnings and selectively harvested by specific families at certain times of year. But to early colonists' eyes, this was merely a vast open prairie (albeit one to which they were drawn). They failed to see the intricate arrangement between plants and people. As John Lutz writes, "ironically, it was the open camas prairies, maintained by the Lekwungen's regular burning that attracted European settlement to their territory."[106]

Today, Bryce's work to restore kwetlal food meadows has a clear aim: to help reconnect her people with their now-urban territories (the cities of Victoria and Esquimalt). It is not always clear, however, what visions of "nature" motivate non-Native people when we get involved with re-wilding and other restorative environmental projects that blur distinctions between native and non-native species or cultivated versus wild spaces.

Here is another illustration. The Brooklyn-based Next Epoch Seed Library (NESL) is an artist-run organization co-founded by Ellie Irons and Anne Percoco. Its aim is to engage the public in artistic and science-based education projects—one of which is called "The Lawn (Re)Disturbance Laboratory (Lawn Lab)." Lawn Lab is a "public experiment in collaboration with seeds, time, and weeds," they write.[107] The experiment involves removing one-meter squares of grass from the lawns of participating public institutions like universities using only small hand-held tools. Afterwards, yellow

---

[105] Zoe Tennant, "Virtual Nature Walk Offers 'Another Way to Connect to Our Homelands,'" *CBC Radio* online, last modified April 24, 2020, https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/how-indigenous-people-are-making-connections-and-finding-support-during-covid-19-pandemic-1.5542924/virtual-nature-walk-offers-another-way-to-connect-to-our-homelands-1.5544044.

[106] John S. Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 67.

[107] Ellie Irons, "The Next Epoch Seed Library's Lawn Lab: A Public Experiment in Collaboration with Seeds, Time, and Weeds," *Media+Environment* 2, no.1 (2020): n.p., DOI: 10.1525/001c.13470.

sculptural pyramids are placed overtop. They demarcate the site from the surrounding lawn. Didactic signs are placed nearby. The exposed soil eventually turns weedy as previously dormant seeds now germinate. Left to grow on their own, the squares might be read as a project of re-wilding. But Irons describes them otherwise: “not re-wilded, but un-lawned.”[108] This language offers an alternative framework for thinking about the history of lawns and what concepts are invoked in efforts to replace them. Even still, as public education projects, the Lawn Lab squares are charged with anticipation around what will grow. The unruly weediness sometimes disappoints participants who had expected wild flowers to fill the bare dirt. Weeds are not what everyone has in mind when imagining what might grow in place of a lawn.[109] Public experiments like Lawn Lab are not immune to notions of desirability. Publics, after all, are informed by popular conceptualizations of native plants and re-wilding (especially as it involves wildflowers.) While such projects gesture at different ways of relating to or caring for the ecological wellbeing of a place, they sometimes elide ecological knowledge—especially when popular notions of nature drive expectations of what should take root.

2.3. Gardens as a Life Lived in Balance

From a single square meter of lawn at an urban campus to a clearing in the trees atop a mountain, what is allowed to belong in natural spaces is always culturally inflected. In “Burning the Shelter,” late novelist Louis Owens (Choctaw, Cherokee) tells a story from his days as a United States Forest Services ranger. He worked in Glacier Peak Wilderness, roughly three hours’ drive south from Vancouver in the state of Washington. In the fall of 1976, he was tasked with removing a dilapidated shelter high up in the mountains—part of the local Forest Service’s efforts to “remove all human-made objects from wilderness areas.” At the time of taking the job, Owens “heartily approved.”[110] Upon arrival, he found the cabin in a poor state. The work of demolition didn’t take long. He set fire to the remains. Coming back down the mountain, Owens encountered two elderly sisters making their way to the very same cabin, now a pile of

---

[108] Ellie Irons, “Contested Turf: Exploring Phytocentric Pedagogies with the Lawn (Re)Disturbance Laboratory” (presentation, Society for Social Studies of Science [4S] Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October 6, 2021).

[109] Irons, “Lawn Lab,” n.p.

[110] Louis Owens, “Burning the Shelter,” in *Colors of Nature: Culture, Identity, and the Natural World*, eds. Alison H. Deming and Lauret E. Savoy (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2011), 211.

ash. “A long time ago, this was all our land,” the sisters tell him, “all Indi’n land everywhere you can see. Our people had houses up in the mountains, for gathering berries every year.”[111] Owens’ pride turned to shame. As they left to head up the mountain, now with only a tarp to stay dry, the sisters forgave Owens. “Gradually, almost painfully,” he remembers:

> I began to understand that what I called ‘wilderness’ was an absurdity, nothing more than a figment of the European imagination. . . . Before the European invasion, there was no wilderness in North America; there was only the fertile continent, where people lived in a hard-learned balance with the natural world.[112]

A life lived in balance with the natural world might be another definition for gardening. Albeit more of an aspirational definition than a picture of how gardening is now largely practiced. Such balance recalls Daniel Heath Justice’s description of Indigenous governance: a “system that keeps the people in balance with one another, with other peoples and realities, and with the world.”[113] So much of gardening defies Justice’s words. Yes, many gardens are beautiful: spaces of rest and contemplation. But, here, on lands brutally stolen from Indigenous nations, gardens are expressions of settler sovereignty. The “dispossession of the colonized of their land,” writes Cole Harris, was wrought with a “set of disciplinary technologies of which maps, numbers, and law were perhaps the most important.”[114] Maps made unfamiliar spaces newly familiar to early colonists and later settlers. Numbers replaced local knowledges of place and parsed land into organizing schema that could be administered from afar. Laws worked to transform land into property, a resource to be exploited.

Gardens, then, must also be characterized as sites that have uprooted and disturbed local ecologies and lifeways, in favour of designs and ornamental plants oftentimes unsuited to particular climates. “What is the relationship between gardening and conquest?” demands Jamaica Kincaid.[115] Almost in direct answer, Myers responds: everything. In a recent conference paper, Myers asks, “can I activate a Planthroposcene

---

[111] Owens, “Burning the Shelter,” 212.

[112] Owens, “Burning the Shelter,” 213.

[113] Justice, “Go Away, Water!,” 354.

[114] Harris, “How Did Colonialism Dispossess?,” 179.

[115] Kincaid, *My Garden (Book):*, 116.

in my own backyard?"[116] The Planthroposcene is an "aspirational episteme," an alternative to conceiving of our current epoch as one of anthropocentric ruin. For Myers, it is a way of "doing life in which people come to recognize their profound interimplication with plants" and a call to reimagine encounters between humans and plants in order to "make allies with these green beings."[117]

In answer to her own question (and by extension Kincaid's, too), Myers concludes that "until property is abolished and the fences come down, a Planthroposcene cannot take root."[118] Front and backyard gardens are undergirded by legal frameworks and property rights. They cannot nurture the kinds of Planthroposcene relations Myers imagines. In the Americas, as Myers argues, such gardens only exist because of the national park and the plantation—spaces that orchestrated "colonial rearrangements" of land and of personhood.[119] The enclosure of the park facilitated the continued removal and dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral homelands. It rendered large areas of forests, plains, and mountains suddenly unpeopled.[120] The plantation and its logics of possession and captivity were instrumental to the idea of property. In many ways, Rinaldo Walcott writes, Black people are "the foundation" of the idea of property itself.[121] As a violent reordering of human and nonhuman lifeways, settler colonialism works by "making Indigenous land into property, and [by] designating the bodies of slaves as property, or chattel."[122] In the Americas, at least, residential gardens must be appraised in light of the violent removal of Indigenous peoples and the brutal transformation of Black life into property.

Myers' work nuances how I think about gardens and current trends like re-wilding, paying attention not only to the material and symbolic registers through which

---

[116] Natasha Myers, "Gardening Otherwise: Teachings from a Pandemic Garden on Stolen Land" (presentation, Society for Social Studies of Science [4S] Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October 6, 2021).

[117] Myers, "From the Anthropocene to the Planthroposcene," 299-300.

[118] Myers, "Gardening Otherwise."

[119] Myers, "Gardening Otherwise."

[120] For a succinct overview of the history of the creation of the national parks within Canada, see Claire Elizabeth Campbell's "Governing a Kingdom: Parks Canada, 1911-2011," in *A Century of Parks Canada, 1911-2011*, ed. Claire Elizabeth Campbell, 1-20, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011).

[121] Walcott, *On Property*, 27.

[122] Tuck, McKenzie, and McCoy, "Land Education," 7.

concepts of the rural or the wilderness have come to be seen as separate from the garden, but also to concepts of property and histories of enslavement and removal. Likewise, her work helps me remain cognizant of how gardens are co-created by plant and animal life and dependent on elemental forces like wind or water—never shaped by human hands alone.

2.4. Gardens as a Mess

At the end of these remarks, what a garden is might seem a little less clear than when we began. If all of this definitional work seems like a mess, would anything less messy make a mess of describing it? This is John Law's question. It gets at the performative aspect of social sciences methods which so often work to suppress mess—in research but also in reality. For Law, it is not just that we have different perspectives on a singular reality, but that realities are enacted by what our scholarly and other practices include and exclude. This is a matter of "the politics of reality." As Law writes, "our methods are performative," a point that is "simultaneously a matter to do with method, politics, ethics, and inspiration." Nothing about reality is "consistent, coherent and definite."[123] To say that early settlers simply had a difference of perspective regarding kwetlal food meadows is not accurate. They arrived with an entirely different reality in tow: one in which plants, hillsides, and sea breezes were devoid of personhood and agency. A singular reality into which these lands were, through practice, conscripted.

I opt for messiness in hopes that my remarks above might lead to more generative questions for educators. I agree with Law: mess is not a problem that needs fixing or tidying up. Rather mess needs to be central to how environmental education is taught. Whose practices—including language practice—enact the world of "nature"? What concepts are repeated and what is made absent when we say what gardens *are*? As Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) writes, language "shapes the

[123] John Law, "Making a Mess with Method," in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Science Methodology*, eds. William Outhwaite and Stephen P. Turner (London: SAGE Publications, 2007), 605, DOI: 10.4135/9781848607958.

meaning of physical space as well as our interaction with it, and in doing so has material effects."[124]

Much of western environmentalism has been unable to confront the violent exuberances of capitalism and colonialism and, indeed, at times has willingly participated.[125] Other modes of practice—of thinking, reading, and writing—might be required to reimagine our relationship with the natural world. Teachers and students, however, come to the question of what is "natural" already steeped in ideas about how nature should look and behave, what kinds of nature are best, and so on. These ideas cross-pollinate with less mainstream ways of apprehending nature, sometimes from altogether other realities, as I hope I have demonstrated. Often, they support the status quo. What gardens are, what the wilderness is, what counts as natural, and how we act in regard to these spaces is not simply a matter of swapping a new definition for the old. Rather, we need a messy conglomeration of many ways to describe, attend to, and care for our relations. As the Crex Crex Collective writes, "New relationships and commensurate language will arise slowly out of action—actual engagement in new ways of being present to, and interacting with, the world"[126]

With increasing frequency, Indigenous cosmologies, knowledges, and thinkers are looked to for guidance on ways of living that better sustain both human and more-than-human life. These are important shifts. However, as Mathew Arthur and I have cautioned in our collaborative work on composting as method, there are risks entailed in turning to dispossessed humans, nonhumans, and their knowledges as resources for ecological resilience.[127] Instead, and invoking the language of turning we write:

---

[124] Mishuana Goeman, "From Place to Territories and Back Again: Centering Storied Land in the Discussion of Indigenous Nation-building," *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 1, no. 1 (2008): 25, DOI: 10.5204/ijcis.v1i1.20.

[125] Richard Grove, for example, argues that by the eighteenth century, proto environmentalist concerns began to take shape. Largely, these responded to worries that climatic and environmental changes (especially in tropical regions), and the possibility of famine and species extinctions would hamper the long-term desires of capitalist states and companies. Extraction and environmentalism were tied together. (Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995], 13-15.)

[126] Crex Crex Collective, *Wild Pedagogies*, 36.

[127] Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Indigenous Resistance Lifts the Veil of Colonial Amnesia," *Geeze* (Winter, 2014): 13.

> the work of turning and turning the pile is not a turning-to (as if there were someone or something to look to for answers, some "pure" state of encounter, or a final answer about the workings of agency or knowledge), but rather a turning-with: an always present living-out together in "this here and this now," always situated.[128]

If the regenerative capacity of compost can occasion new modes of togetherness, it does so by reconfiguring the boundaries between subjects, upsetting temporalities, and transforming waste into good soil. It is a model for working together across difference and for how old and new ideas might together regenerate: everything in a constant state of decomposition and growth. Weeds crop up and waste or scraps become what gets returned to garden beds as nutrient-rich compost. Edges become less certain. Rot, ooze, and smell bring about new proximities and forms of togetherness, however unpleasant they might seem.

2.5. What's Next

In Chapter 1, I wrote about the edges that give shape to a garden and its surroundings. In this second chapter, I considered how understandings of nature or land work as both practices and conceptual edges that give meaning to gardens. However, it is too simple to say that the first chapter is about materiality and the present chapter about language practices. Together, both chapters hopefully provide a sense of the garden as a material-semiotic space where natural and built features emerge alongside practices and concepts and vice versa. The terms invoked to describe gardens are tied up in historical processes that have produced natural and cultivated spaces in particular and sometimes violent ways. I have tried to show what worlds gardens are conscripted into—and what worlds gardens reproduce. The next chapter is a rough sketch of the garden outside the small basement suite where I live—a space I garden (Fig. 4). It is an attempt at drawing together some of the insights of the previous two chapters as a rubric for what kinds of considerations educators (especially those working in environmental education) might include in encounters with the natural world, including gardens. Like a compost pile, my rendering is full of scraps: things that might not usually jump to mind

---

[128] Mathew Arthur and Reuben Jentink, "Composting Settler Nationalisms," *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* 1, no. 3 (2018): 171, DOI: 10.22387/CAP2018.20. "This here and this now," see Margot Leigh Butler, "Whadda YOU mean?: Semiotics Workshop" (lecture, Humanities 101, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, 2017).

when we think about a garden's composition and meaning but from which we might learn about our place in the world from within the garden.

Figure 4. My Garden. Vancouver (Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territories). June 2022. Photo by author.

Chapter 3. The Garden on Fire

This third turn about the garden is an experiment in composition. Just as the first chapter focused on one garden in particular—that of my parents—this chapter homes in on the small garden my partner and I care for outside our ground-level suite in Vancouver (Fig. 4). While the first two chapters were primarily concerned with the edges that bring a garden into coherence (material and definitional edges, respectively), this chapter turns its attention to that which jumps the garden's boundaries: what exceeds, spills over, or eludes the garden walls. Other edges are simply hard to make out. Grass grows long and weeds crop up. Fences fall apart. Meanings change. The aim of this chapter is not to unravel the work of the previous two; instead I am after a fashion of garden storytelling that models ways of writing about our shared vulnerabilities and interimplication with the world and its more-than-human lifeways without neglecting or disavowing some of the more fraught histories that structure its current makeup. Which is to say that this third and final chapter takes as its grounding the insights of the previous two chapters but then asks, what else? For me, the else might be a way of garden storytelling that traces histories, pays attention to the havoc brought by a changing climate, and is open to the possibility of a garden being other than simply a space of quite repose. Why, asks Jamaica Kincaid, “must people insist that the garden is a place of rest and repose, a place to forget the cares of the world, a place in which to distance yourself from the painful responsibility that comes with being a human being?”[129] I am after a mode of garden appraisal that does not privilege the garden’s boundaries at the expense of all else. A kind of garden storytelling that does not forget the cares of the world. Which is to say, I am after better accounts of the world. Might other such stories—whether they be accounts of the garden or of other natural spaces—reorient how it is we relate to the world around us? Language, writes Mishuana Goeman, “has the power to construct reality.” Narrative and story can “(re)create meanings of land.”[130] By turning our attention toward that which breaches its assumed boundaries, the composition of a garden may change.

---

[129] Jamaica Kincaid, “Sowers and Reapers,” *New Yorker* (January 22, 2001): 41.

[130] Goeman, “From Place to Territories,” 32.

I say that this chapter is about the garden outside of where I live. But the concerns that preoccupy my thinking here extend beyond this particular garden's edges. Included is an abbreviated history of the tulip, an account of other gardens nearby that inspired what plants I chose to grow here, and musings on the late summer smoke that hangs in the air from forest fires far off. The three stories that make up this chapter are somewhat disconnected. What brings them together is the place from which they were thought: the garden outside my small apartment. In a garden journal, stories need not be related in any straightforward manner, except that they concern (in some minor way) the garden at hand. A garden journal might be like a compost heap (a heaping together), or an anthology series as in a collection of different stories. Anthology: from the ancient Greek *anthología*, meaning "flower gathering." To bring a series together is to make an arrangement, to mark an edge of sorts—however indefinite. It is to compose a sense of relationality where things (stories, objects, scraps, or cut flowers) might otherwise seem unrelated.

In some gardens, bulbs are given pride of place and this chapter, likewise, begins with tulips. This is not a story of origins, but one which traces movement. It is a story in which a wildflower is dug out of the earth, moved about, traded, and reproduced. It is about a flower that tied together continents, remade economies, and nurtured new ideas of beauty. The second story is about the teachings of plants, about blackberries and a summer afternoon spent in a garden called xʷc̓ic̓əsəm. The final story is about air and more specifically about forest fires and smoke, and works to tie histories of devastation into the world's present unraveling. It is also a story about our own breath and what it might mean to garden in the choking thick of too much smoke. Together, these stories might foster something of a critical literacy of gardens styled after what Sandra Styres (Kanien 'kehá:ka) has called "literacies of land."[131] A literacy that does not rely on cut and dry divisions between nature and culture, poisoned and pure, or urban and rural, but is instead awake to the ways in which these categories collapse in the forced intimacy of breath. (We will come to what this means shortly.)

---

[131] Sandra Styres, "Literacies of Land: Decolonizing Narratives, Storying, and Literature," in *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, eds. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, (New York: Routledge, 2018), 178, DOI: 10.4324/9780429505010.

Citing Hannah Arendt, Malinda S. Smith writes that “storytelling should reveal meaning without committing the error of defining it.”[132] What I understand this to mean within the confines of a garden is that part of our work as educators is to provide accounts of the world that better speak to our entanglement with the world without necessarily prescribing meaning or imposing interpretive limitations. (Perhaps other educators might find this modeling helpful in their own situations and classrooms.) I know that so much of how I “see” the natural world has already been primed by certain representations of it (whether they be in film, painting, or writing). Oftentimes, those representations bear the marks of, for example, a romanticized nature or a devastated wasteland. I am after a kind of nature writing—be it of the garden or elsewhere—that perhaps works at the fuzziness between these two tropes (and others), not as oppositional binaries but rather as constitutive descriptors of the world as it has been made. To this end, I am inspired by the late feminist cultural theorist, Lesley Stern’s closing remarks in an essay on the highways, canyons, native plant gardens, borderlands, and cities of the Tijuana-San Diego region, “You emphasize edges and boundaries that are permeable. . . . Through small but incremental gestures, you begin to shape a way to see the landscape differently. To see it as mutable: solids and liquids. Obstructions and flows. Steel edges and permeable borders.”[133]

3.1. Tulips

What does it mean to plant a garden full with tulips, in late fall after a summer of devastating forest fires, not sweltering but deadly heat, and a record-breaking lack of rainfall in a coastal city used to being sodden? To plant a garden full with tulips *here*, in this particular place, in this city, in a private, residential garden within the clearcut and industrially-poisoned lands and waterways of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations, atop a hill that might once have been home to towering Douglas fir and red cedar, scrappy vine maple, and thickets of salal.

---

[132] Malinda S. Smith, “Gender, Whiteness, and ‘other Others’ in the Academy,” in *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century*, eds. Sherene Razack, Malinda S. Smith, and Sunera Thobani (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010), 43.

[133] Lesley Stern, “A Garden or a Grave? The Canyonic Landscape of the Tijuana-San Diego Region,” in *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, eds. Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, and Nils Bubandt, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), G29.

In order to be planted here, these bulbs had to travel a long way. I purchased bags of bulbs from my nearby garden nursery, where lots of floor space was given to the spring-blooming flowers: tulips, daffodils, hyacinth, crocuses. Bulbs are good for business the abundance of varieties said. The bulbs are packaged and sold in quantities of six by a national distributor, who, like most of the rest of the world, sources their stock from the Netherlands. I bought triumph, double fringed, and parrot varieties, in hues of bright pinks, silken whites, and near-black purples. They have names like "Apricona," "Silk Road," and "Black Hero." Names that tell a story about provenance and breeding, reference histories, or conjure up fantasies. When something attracts us—when something has a good story—it draws us in. As Michalinos Zembylas writes, the impulse to "ask about this world is a desire to understand ourselves" in relation to the world.[134] In piquing my interest, these names caused me to ask something of how these flowers came to be in my hands, where they came from, and by what means. Names can also name what is familiar. Or rename what is unfamiliar, as Kincaid reminds me.[135] A name can be the start of a story. Or the end of another.

But my story of tulips does not begin with their names. And it is older than one supply chain linking two countries across an ocean. From their wild-growing provenance in the valleys of the Tien Shan Mountains in Central Asia, tulips were first domesticated by the Ottomans. Following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Sultan Mehmed II (1451–1481) gave tulips pride of place in the newly-designed pleasure gardens laid out in walled courtyards spread throughout the city. His twelve personal gardens, including orchards, kitchen, and pleasure gardens were so vast, writes Anna Pavord, that eventually a dedicated staff of 920 gardeners was needed to maintain them.[136] Not long after, under Suleyman the Magnificent (1495–1566), horticulturalists spread tulips to gardens throughout the empire. During the 16th century, tulips made the

---

[134] Michalinos Zembylas, "Risks and Pleasures: A Deleuzo-Guattarian Pedagogy of Desire in Education," *British Educational Research Journal* 33, no. 3 (2007): 332, 334. Emphasis in original.

[135] Jamaica Kincaid, "In History," *Callaloo* 20, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 623.

[136] Anna Pavord, *The Tulip: The Story of a Flower that has Made Men Mad* (London: Bloomsbury, 1999), 31-33.

leap from garden beds onto ceramics, textiles and all manner of design and patterning.[137]

Then the Dutch enter the story. Almost one hundred years after arriving in Constantinople, the bulbs landed in Antwerp in 1562 alongside tobacco and tea, tracing lines of war, trade, and colonization, and traversing unsteady borders to land on the grounds of Amsterdam's rich (newly flush from the exploits of the Dutch East Indies Company, a transnational undertaking with the power to establish colonies and negotiate treaties). Tulipomania followed: the early seventeenth-century market craze of unchecked floral speculation, and tulip futures made possible by striated, fiery cultivars whose changes in pigmentation were transmitted flower-to-flower by aphids infected with the tulip mosaic virus.

Today, the Dutch government sends tulips to Canada every year in remembrance of the part that the Canadian military played in the liberation of the Netherlands during the Second World War. This is a detail I know from my Oma, who remembers being a young girl when the Canadians arrived. "De Canadezen, de Canadezen," they shouted. So, this way of telling the story of tulips quickly risks sentimentality, risks being overly personal. But in the story of tulips, empires have come and gone. World powers have shifted. Tastes have matured. Cultivars have proliferated. Scientific nomenclature and fields of study have developed. And while tulips were named tulip long before Carl Linnaeus arrived in Amsterdam, it was in a greenhouse belonging to George Clifford, a director of the Dutch East India Company, where Linnaeus first laid out his system of naming. There, in 1735—"Adam-like," writes Kincaid[138]—Linnaeus invented his classificatory system, in the warm, humid air of a greenhouse, financed through plunder and surrounded by plants stolen from all over the world. There, tulips became genus *Tulipa*.

Today, planting tulips is an exercise in logistics and modern technologies; it requires shipping networks and functioning ports; digital ordering and payment systems; the internet; as well as farmers, greenhouses, fertilizers, and land. Before I planted tulips

---

[137] Maarten J. M. Christenhusz et al., "Tiptoe Through the Tulips—Cultural History, Molecular Phylogenetics and Classification of *Tulipa* (Liliaceae)," *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society* 172, no. 3 (2013): 282, DOI: 10.1111/boj.12061.

[138] Kincaid, "In History," 626.

in my garden, I filled it with other plants. Only a few months before the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a pandemic, my partner and I moved into a new apartment: a small ground-level suite in a newly-built house in a neighbourhood once home to Vancouver's working classes. Now, in tidy, well-kept front yards, neighbours display signs reading "No MegaTowers at Safeway," a protest suturing an unlikely alliance between low-income apartment renters worried about rising rental costs to the desires of wealthy homeowners keen to keep the neighbourhood as it is (and their property values high). Then, the area that was slated to be our garden was just a pit of debris and required some light landscaping. A bit of digging, a short retaining wall to be built, and a significant amount of dirt to be swapped in for the rubble and clay that had been left behind: yard work that offered us something to do with our hands in our freshly house-bound lives. Once all the harder labour was complete, we dug in bags of compost, planted a rush of flowering perennials, scattered seeds, and watched as things grew.

And grow things did. The area is small, only about 8 feet by 9 feet. It is terraced to meet the ground level behind. The two stepped garden beds are full of native and non-native species, a mix we selected from plants we moved from our old place, from seeds that we started indoors, and newly-purchased plants from the nursery. Our garden faces south and east so we chose plants that would thrive in the afternoon heat. We thought we might grow medicines and vegetables, but we quickly learned that while we had enough heat the hours of sunlight were too short. Still, calendula, bugbane, and ashwagandha seemed to thrive. We tried to include pollinator-friendly plants. We chose tall and lanky flowers—like echinacea—interspersed with grasses: to compose something that resembles a prairie garden. And all in a pallet of mostly purples, pale pinks, and cream-coloured flowers. So, the composition of the garden is a mix of impulses, desires, and failures—to say nothing of all the work that the plants and other beings do themselves in the co-composition of the garden. Mostly, however, we planted a mix of species that we had first learned about in xʷc̓ic̓əsəm (the subject of the next story). We did not always know what was native to here so we started with the native plant sections found in many local nurseries. We relied on this merchandizing to make some choices. As we came to learn, however, the geography of this categorization varies from store to store. In some, native means the region of the Pacific Northwest. Other times, it refers to all of North America, an area so large that the designation

becomes almost meaningless. Still in other stores, the designation is less about geographical provenance and more about ideas of cultivation and evolution. Often, it is a mix.

So we turned to a popular field guide, *Plants of Coastal British Columbia*,[139] which we had on the bookshelf and would take hiking with us to play amateur naturalists. The guide is nicely laid out: there are pictures, drawings, and detailed descriptions of leaves, flowers, and fruits for identification. There are notes about a plant's ecology, its status in the region (native, naturalized, or invasive), and information about how a plant was and is used by Indigenous peoples (referred to as ethnobotany). The plants themselves are organized into broad categories like trees, ferns, wild flowers, etc. For each entry, both common and scientific names are listed. So, in order to determine what is and is not a native plant species, we found ourselves right back in the midst of Linnaean binomial nomenclature. In order for us to choose native plants for the garden, we were compelled into a classificatory system alien to a range of local cosmologies that render plants not as species but as kin. In other words, in the garden, definitions, histories, knowledges, encounters, power grabs, and realities are all at stake.

3.2. xʷc̓ic̓əsəm

That is one way of telling the story of tulips. Here is another: in the summer of 2016, I worked as a caretaker in a garden called xʷc̓ic̓əsəm, in a bright back corner of the teaching and research farm at the University of British Columbia's Point Grey campus. The name was given to the garden in 2014 and means "the place where we grow" in the Hunquminum language of the Musqueam people. Also known as the "Indigenous Health Research and Education Garden," it is a place where medicinal plants—both native and non-native to the northwest pacific coast—grow together. Such species mixing often troubles garden visitors' expectations of what they'll find growing in a "native plant garden." It certainly troubled mine when I first arrived in the garden. As Matt Cavers cautions, care is needed so that "people do not confuse native plant gardening with Aboriginality." Cavers' point is that in some cases, native plant gardening can quickly descend into a form of "eco-nationalism" (the term is geographer Franklin

---

[139] Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon (eds.), *Plants of Coastal British Columbia: Including Washington, Oregon, & Alaska*, Revised ed. (Edmonton: Lone Pine Pub, 2004).

Ginn's) through which settler peoples "distance themselves from the messy events of colonialism" by taking a great interest in the imagined neutrality of the support and cultivation of local native ecosystems.[140] In xʷc̓ic̓əsəm, eucalyptus and lavender grow alongside tobacco, yarrow, wild roses, mints, and other species often seen as weeds, like dandelion. Here, questions of origin are less relevant than notions of being in good relation. Plants are allowed to wander or are moved to a different part of the garden if their current placement is wrong. Weeds are given space to grow or are "weeded out" with care if their growth comes at the expense of another's. Work in the garden is done with respect—undertaken with notions of reciprocity between plants and humans and a sense of mutual responsibility.

Seen from above, the garden resembles a flower with four petals extending from a centre point. Each of these petals corresponds to one of the human body's four main areas of health: circulation, respiration, digestion, and emotion or mood. The plants growing in these blade-shaped beds and their medicinal qualities, likewise, pertain to these systems. (Which is not to say that the plants did not find ways of moving about the garden.) Around these petals, pathways and other crescent-shaped beds form a large circle. This circular shape references a tool known as a spindle whorl, used to prepare wool for weaving. The spindle whorl was incorporated into the design to acknowledge its importance in Coast Salish weaving traditions, and to recognize the recent work of Musqueam women artists whose efforts revitalized these traditions after their practice was banned by Canadian colonial policies. Decisions in the garden are overseen by the Medicine Collective, a group of Indigenous elders whose work is guided by the principle that food and plants are medicine[141]—where medicine is understood as including time spent in the garden and taking care of the land. Our caretaking team was led by Keisha Charnley (Katzie), who taught me that the plants themselves are the teachers. This is a humbling proposition for someone who was then newly starting to take seriously that plants have agency beyond their willfulness to grow. When I started in the garden, I did not know what to make of this. I am not certain I can say exactly what this means now. But here is one thing that I learned:

---

[140] Cavers, "Victoria's Own Oak Tree," 82-83.

[141] "Medicine Collective," University of British Columbia, accessed May 5 2022, https://lfs-iherg.sites.olt.ubc.ca/the-medicine-collective/.

One hot August afternoon, I was alone in the garden, harvesting blackberries for our caretaking collective's end-of-summer celebration. I found myself balanced precariously on an unsteady farm chair and covered in scratches—as one often does when harvesting blackberries. Alone, I laughed to myself: blackberry, I realized, was taunting me—hanging the juiciest berries far beyond my reach. Moving down to the next patch, I saw a bird who, unlike me, easily feasted from those higher up berries. Next, a bee. Soon, I recognized a whole assembly of other harvesters. So, here is what I learned from blackberry that day: first, that I was far from alone in the garden. Second, I was reminded of the importance of taking only what I needed—in my case, just enough for a pie to share with my eight companions—while leaving the rest for others. Blackberry had kept some out of reach, so that human, bird, and bee "hands" could share, too. Plants are "generous and kind," affirms Michif artist Christi Belcourt. They "never stop giving to all life on earth."[142] I am careful about how freely I share this story, knowing that Indigenous peoples' lands and knowledges have both been exploited. But I am also reminded of Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's words: "intelligence is not an individual's property to own." And once an individual has "carried a particular teaching . . . they also become responsible for sharing it."[143]

Thinking about this teaching within the context of the last few pandemic years, I wonder about the impoverishment of our sensibilities with regard to the more-than-human world. Spending so much time at home was a public health measure, described as a policy of keeping socially- and physically-distant so as to mitigate the virus' spread. Without question, an important measure. But whose lifeways were rendered nonexistent in this rearrangement of social life? Social distancing, writes Mathew Arthur, "implies an asociality to the material fullness of the nonhuman world."[144] An asociality that simply does not square with our entanglement with that world. Plants "reach out across the cosmos," writes Natasha Myers, "drawing the energy of the sun into their tissues so that they can work their terrestrial magic." She carries on:

---

[142] Christi Belcourt, "The Revolution has Begun," in *Toward What Justice? Describing Diverse Dreams of Justice in Education*, eds. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (New York: Routledge, 2018), 114.

[143] Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 157.

[144] Mathew Arthur, "Writing Pandemic Feels," *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* 2, nos. 1-2 (2019-2020): vii.

> Plants compose liveable, breathable, nourishing worlds. As they exhale, they compose the atmosphere; as they decompose, they matter the compost and feed the soil. Holding the earth down and the sky up, they sing in nearly audible ultrasonic frequencies as they transpire, moving massive volumes of water from the depths of the earth up to the highest clouds. They cleanse the waters and nourish all other life. . . . They literally breathe us into being.[145]

All plants—even tulips—do this. Native studies scholar Jack Forbes (Powhatan-Renapé, Delaware-Lenápe) writes this set of relations in the reverse. "Just like the trees, we are rooted," he writes. "But our roots come out of our nose and mouth, like an umbilical cord, forever connected to the rest of the world. . . . That which the tree exhales, I inhale. That which I exhale, the trees inhale."[146] So I am after a way of speaking to this fragile pairing of photosynthesis and respiration. More than that, I am after a language for educators that captures some of the entanglements of modern life—even our entanglements with the infrastructures, energy sources, modes of consumption, and so on that are contributing to the increasing unlivability of the planet. As Erin Marie Konsmo and Karyn Recollet call for, this might be a language of "meeting the land(s) where they are at."[147]

Himalayan blackberry, *Rubus armeniacus*, is often found at the top of any list of invasive plant species. It spreads by seed or cutting. A branch that touches the ground will send out roots. Dense thickets follow. Riversides, vacant lots, or gullies can quickly become engulfed. Other plants are choked out. Its berries are delicious but blackberry is seen as a scourge. I like that in a garden best understood as a "native plant garden" it was the so-called invasive species that taught me a lesson about taking only what you need. There is a strange irony at play! Blackberry takes more than what it needs—smothering all else in its tangle—or so goes the story encouraging its enthusiastic removal. Blackberry is a "bad" plant. [148] Still, blackberry was my first plant teacher. I raise

---

[145] Natasha Myers, "How to Grow Livable Worlds: Ten Not-So-Easy Steps," in *The World to Come: Art in the Age of the Anthropocene*, ed. Kerry Oliver-Smith (Gainesville: Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida, 2018), 55.

[146] Jack D. Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Wétiko Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism and Terrorism*, rev. ed. (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008), 145-146.

[147] Konsmo and Recollet, "Meeting the Land(s)," 244.

[148] This line of thinking carries us toward the important insights of queer ecologies and the questions raised concerning the interplay between what gets counted as "natural" in nature and what gets positioned as "unnatural" with regard to sex, sexuality, and gender. See, for example, the edited anthology, *Queer Ecologies: Sex Nature Politics Desire*. (Catriona Mortimer-

this point not to be glib, and to be clear, I am not advocating for any assistance given to blackberry; it does just fine on its own. Rather, I raise this point to suggest that our categories of analysis might be insufficient for learning about and from the natural world if we are only thinking about what "belongs" from an ecological standpoint. (According to whom? we must ask.) As Catriona Sandilands writes, "we sometimes forget that the knowledge systems we use to conceptualize the world are not necessarily exactly the same thing as the world that we're conceptualizing."[149] In many instances, we may need to be willing to be surprised when certain categories are exceeded (or fail altogether) in our encounters with the more-than-human world.

Figure 5. **Blackberry thicket and old rice ponds. UBC Farm, Vancouver (Musqueam territory). June 2016. Photo by author.**

Sandilands and Bruce Erickson [eds.], *Queer Ecologies: Sex Nature Politics Desire* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010].)

[149] Kamea Chayne and Catriona Sandilands, "Catriona Sandilands: Botanical Colonialism and Biocultural Histories (ep362)," June 28, 2022, in *Green Dreamer*, produced by Kamea Chayne, podcast, MP3 audio, 43:08, https://greendreamer.com/podcast/catriona-sandilands-queer-ecologies.

3.3. Smoke

Figure 6. Smoke at sunset over downtown. Vancouver (Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territories). September 2020. Photo by author.

Here is one more story. Outside the air is cool. The sky is a brilliant grey and feels distant, suspended high up and not pressed close like the rain and winter will soon bring it. It is mid-August and these are the welcome signs of a swelling seasonal change after this summer's inferno. The smoky haze that has been hanging over the city for weeks has, at least for the time being, blown off (Fig. 6). Elsewhere around the world, however, forest fires are still ablaze and people are still on alert, ready to fly, waiting to return home, or have nothing to return to. When water comes gushing from the end of a hose, forest fires can seem like a world away; but smoke proves that they are anything but far. On the global scale, forest fires leap across the digital maps found on government websites tracking a fire's spread. Fire requires other units of analysis attuned to smoke's forced proximities, to the formation of new, terrifying weather patterns—like clouds of fire, pyrocumulonimbus—and to the breathings in and out of all

manner of bodies. Wildfires of this magnitude remake "lifeworlds through the terrible synergies of industrial capitalism and a changing climate," writes environmental anthropologist David Gilbert. Carried by the wind, smoke fills the "atmosphere with toxins—gasses, heavy metals, and particulates." In turn, people, animals, and plants "breathe, drink, and absorb these toxins through their pores—taking up the burned forests and human-built materials of the firescape into their bodies."[150] There is no way around this: we must breathe to live.

As feminist technoscience theorist, Michelle Murphy (Métis) puts it, in every breath we breathe in "environmental violence" as a "condition of being alive today." These chemical relations "connect us" backwards and forwards in time, to "what our bodies will become, in the future environment that we are cumulatively assembling in our complicities and inability to extract ourselves from the webs of capitalist and industrial exuberance."[151] In traditional ecological practice fire made way for new growth. In the exigencies and racial inequalities of fire as climate crisis it is hard to see how renewal might happen. Yet, in the garden—and elsewhere—life persists. The bright, rich colours of mid-July have begun to fade, replaced by the beautiful but dull, saturated pinks, oranges, and purples of late summer. A sunset of *Echinacea purpurea*, *Agastache aurantiaca*, and *Verbena bonariensis*. A palette eerily similar to the range of colours reproduced in the photographic representations of conflagration—what art historian T. J. Demos calls "images of devastation." These images, writes Demos, provide the urban viewer with "a privileged sort of distanced voyeurism" that is unable "to capture the momentousness of loss."[152] The distribution of ruination is unevenly wrought across geographical, temporal, and environmental scales. It compounds already extant global and localized inequalities. But there is no outside of the environmental and ecological disasters we face. No garden wall will keep the fire out.

What do smoke, blackberries, and tulips all have to do with one another? This thesis opens with two quotations: one from the late gay English filmmaker and gardener,

---

[150] David E. Gilbert, "Firescapes, Smoke, and Woe," Hot Spots, *Fieldsights* (July 27, 2021): n.p., accessed November 30, 2021, https://culanth.org/fieldsights/firescapes-smoke-and-woe.

[151] Michelle Murphy, "What Can't a Body Do?," *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 3, no. 1 (2017): 2-3, DOI: 10.28968/cftt.v3i1.

[152] T. J. Demos, "The Agency of Fire: Burning Aesthetics," *e-flux journal* 98 (February, 2019): n.p., accessed November 3, 2021, www.e-flux.com/journal/98/256882/the-agency-of-fire-burning-aesthetics/.

Derek Jarman; and another from the Nehiyaw, Two-Spirit, Trans poet Arielle Twist. First Twist: “Do you remember the sweetness / of freshly picked berries / between the reservations, the cities, / open land, seemingly untouched by white hands?”[153] Twist's poem is about the imposition of Canadian laws onto Indigenous peoples, the forced relocation to reservation lands, and the brute authority of Indian agents. But it is also about the land and its nonhuman inhabitants, about the wildness of berries. Berries that treat those boundaries with playful and defiant irreverence. A fence is no match for blackberry.

Now Jarman: “There are no walls or fences. My garden’s boundaries are the horizon.”[154] A garden without walls or fences is vulnerable to both smoke and fire. So is a garden with walls. In 1994, Jarman died of AIDS-related illnesses. But from the time of his diagnosis in 1986 until his death, he kept a garden in the coastal town of Dungeness in the south of England. Much has been written about his films, activism, and gardening. His garden at Dungeness has been turned into a sort of queer pilgrimage site. The literary scholar Melissa Zeiger writes that Jarman’s garden is a “defiant instance of pleasure and creative response in the face of terminality.”[155] Citing the work of eco-critic Sarah Ensor, Zeiger sees in Jarman’s garden a model for how we might live in a time of increasing ecological and climatic uncertainty. Harm is inevitable, writes Ensor, but the “paradigm that would seek to protect and prevent [harm] above all else also threatens to cordon off, insulating neighbors from one another, and from the forms of mutual assistance, shared vulnerability, and collective agency.”[156] Smoke teaches me about our shared vulnerabilities.

Throughout, I have tried to write with, from, and about the garden in such a way that might inspire others to see both gardens and garden-like spaces as opportunities for learning. But more than this, I have tried to suggest that if education is, as Snaza and Singh write, about collective world-making, then we might pay greater attention (variously, and at different times inhabiting the role of educator, student, learner) to what worlds are presently being made. Forest fire particulates and smoke forces me to think

---

[153] Arielle Twist, “Berries,” *Disintegrate/Dissociate* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2019), 34.

[154] Derek Jarman, *Modern Nature* (London: Vintage, 2018), 3.

[155] Melissa Zeiger, “’Modern Nature’: Derek Jarman’s Garden,” *Humanities* 6, no. 22 (2017): 1, DOI: 10.3390/h6020022.

[156] Sarah Ensor, quoted in Zeiger, “Modern Nature,” 4.

of myself as always more than just my “own” body. I depend on others to breathe—even as I breathe in those others transformed in the devastations brought by climate change. Moreover, smoke might signal a need for nimbleness, and a revaluation of what is deemed to be important, including what it is we think important to know. As educators, we might ask of our curricula and practices what is important for our students to know now, in a changing world?

In the previous two turns, my primary frame of analysis was the edge or border. I examined both conceptual or definitional framings of the garden as well as those more material edges, such as fences, pathways, or plant borders. These garden edges bring the garden into coherence. They give the garden its shape. They delineate the spread of one garden from the next and instruct us on ways of being (and behaving) in the garden. But smoke swirls and is carried by the wind. Waters pool and breach barriers. Roots stretch and seek out cracks. Seeds scatter. The garden’s walls have always been permeable.

Paying closer attention to these porosities might allow us to see the garden in new ways. “Some see objects in the Earth, where I see lungs,” writes Kumeyaay poet Tommy Pico.[157] In his recent chapbook, *On Property*, Rinaldo Walcott makes the argument that calls for abolition and an end to the carceral state must be underwritten by the abolition of property itself. His argument is about the legal (and material) walls that protect the fiction of property. In the Americas, he writes, “Black people will not be fully able to breathe . . . until property itself is abolished.”[158] Since the “enclosure of the commons,” he writes:

> where monarchies in Europe appropriated specific lands for their use and benefit, the commons as both an idea and a practical means of organizing life has been consistently reduced to private property. A renewed idea of the commons for our times brings along with it a different idea of care, too, including for the earth itself. Stewardship is an essential aspect of abolition, and in this instance would include collective responsibility for our shared resources as a basis for how we care for each other . . . property sits at the nexus of our freedom. And not just Black people’s freedom. Abolishing property would free all of us and would lead to the establishment of new

[157] Tommy Pico, *Nature Poem* (Portland: TinHouse Books, 2017), 67.

[158] Walcott, *On Property*, 11.

relationships between people, and between people and animals, the environment, and much else besides.[159]

[159] Walcott, *On Property*, 95-96.

Conclusion: Retracing Our Steps, Remaking the World

At the edge of the garden, you turn around. Maybe you return to the garden entrance, retracing your steps, following the same path in reverse. Only it is not the same anymore, not exactly. Now, the path has a familiarity. A contour you remember. A conclusion is a retracing of steps too. The preceding chapters have demonstrated that, as presently staged, gardens or parks do more to uphold the often violent enclosures of private property than to undo them. Gardens are performative. As configurations of property relations, they are bound up in colonial and capitalist projects that have laid to waste kinships, lifeways, and lands. Gardens are world-making projects. They have been world-ending projects. The environmental and social devastations witnessed today are proof of the "unfinished catastrophes of 1492," writes Robyn Maynard: charred remains of forests, poisoned landscapes, open pit mines, and gardens lavishly watered in the midst of drought. It was Columbus' voyage that inaugurated a "death-making commitment to extraction and dispossession" which soon "took hold on a global scale."[160] Ever since, these commitments have rendered some lives more liveable than others.

Smoke fills the air. The swirling particulate of wildfire symbolizes the ongoing catastrophe of this deadly commitment. It poisons the environmental and biological conditions for life. Smoke also teaches that the garden's walls were always breachable. This is not to take pleasure in the devastation that smoke represents (as some deep ecologists might do) but to ask what smoke and forest fires might teach. Smoke represents more than just devastation; it portends renewal and change. What new relations might we foster in the thick of incinerated forests? What new practices or complicities arise? Wildfires are hard to ignore. As Maynard proposes, they are a "portal, a gateway between one world and the next."[161] Cast as portal, wildfires spark visions of the collective worlds that might take root in the charred remains.

---

[160] Robyn Maynard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Rehearsals for Living* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2022), 10.

[161] Reflecting on the forest fires that engulfed the entire west coast during the summer of 2020, Maynard references Arundhati Roy's April 2020 article, "The Pandemic is a Portal" in the *Financial Times*. (Maynard and Simpson, *Rehearsals for Living*, 242.)

We need not wait, however, until vulnerable gardens are engulfed in flame. We can work in the thick of smoke toward transformation. Walcott's call for a renewed vision of the commons bears on possibilities for and from the garden—as an educational space or otherwise. With smoke now part of the story of gardens, we can learn to see the garden anew—perhaps gardening differently amidst the devastations on both sides of its walls. We might reckon with the question of who gardens are for and whose lifeways they nourish. Beyond questions of inclusion, a renewed vision of the commons would render many of today's gardens unrecognizable. A garden reimagined. What about classrooms? la paperson asks, "How can colonial schools become disloyal to colonialism?"[162] S-he finds an answer in Kikuyu novelist and postcolonial scholar Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's proposition: the decolonial is always already scattered amidst the colonial. Fresh shoots emerging after fire. Seeds scattering in the wind. Weeds cropping up in the compost. If colonial gardens and indeed schools can become disloyal to colonialism, it will be through practices that take inspiration from the growth that comes after fire, from the unruliness of weeds, the cleverness of berries. Rather than guarding a garden of native species, purging all else that might grow, we might let things grow a little more wilfully.

This is not just wordplay. Nathan Snaza and Julietta Singh (whose definition of education as collective world-making is crucial to my project) propose the concept of "educational undergrowth," a framework that points to a "wider, more diffuse set of practices of collective sense making and world making than dominant, European, imperialist, and Enlightenment conceptions allow."[163] And here, the undergrowth is all that is already taking place in spite of the official workings of educational and other institutions. It happens in the brambles, along a warren of informal paths, or under the cover of smoke.

A commitment to educational undergrowth challenges us to seek out spaces once deemed unworthy of care—spaces which might be future gardens. Far from a sensibility focused singularly on control or rehabilitation, this is a call to seek out what is already going on, ways of being already underway. Education happens "whenever and wherever there is a collective grappling with the conditions of (un)livability and

---

[162] la paperson, *A Third University*, xvi.

[163] Snaza and Singh, "Dehumanist Education," 1.

speculating on how to grow and cultivate alternatives."[164] Park and community garden gatherings. Seed sharing and plant swaps. With friends and family, with strangers. Study, listening, or walking groups. Over coffee, in the library, in the rain.

This is why I like the garden over and above other "natural" spaces as a site of educational inquiry. Gardens are "sites where people *stage their relationships with plants*"[165] and it is up to their constituent plants and people to determine where, how, and with whom a garden grows. Relations with the more-than-human world happen regardless of how "natural" a place is seen to be. A clump of moss on a shaded window ledge. A cluster of pots in a driveway. A kid's fairy garden at the base of a boulevard tree. Gardens are fraught, non-innocent sites where atmospheric and biological processes, human and industrial efforts, and nonhuman lifeways come together. They are made through the slow, seasonal growth and decomposition of plant life. They are suffused with chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and store-bought dirt. They rely on water and sunlight and the visitation of nonhumans. Gardens are work. Thinking this way disrupts discourses of purity and forces us to question how lifeways and worlds have been shaped in very particular ways.

Encountering gardens as both contiguous and continuous with what has been laid to waste allows for new ways of caring for land both inside and beyond perimeter walls. It may seem odd to designate gardens as sites of ruin. But for a garden to be shaped into form, as Thylias Moss writes, some plants must go to a "killing field or field of minor-league obscurity, an agricultural pesticide-ridden or penal death row."[166] Often, gardens are only beautiful because of what has been pulled up and thrown out. As I have demonstrated throughout, entire lifeways have sometimes been cast aside in the pursuit of desirable gardens. In our work on compost as a pedagogy of multispecies relations, Mathew Arthur and I often write of scraps—what lands in the compost pile. Compost offers an ethic for attending to discards.[167] Whether in a classroom or at a field

---

[164] Snaza and Singh, "Dehumanist Education," 4.

[165] Myers, "From Edenic Apocalypse," 116. Emphasis in original.

[166] Thylias Moss, "Tarsenna's Defiance Garden: In Which I Love to Spit," in *Colors of Nature: Culture, Identity, and the Natural World*, eds. Alison H. Deming and Lauret E. Savoy (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2011), 285.

[167] Mathew Arthur and Reuben Jentink, "Compost to Compostables: Now, What Other Figurations?" (presentation, Society for Social Studies of Science [4S] Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October 7, 2021).

site, our curricula and teaching habits might look to ethical questions surfaced by gardens and practices like composting in order to shake up uncritical categories of "natural" and "unnatural," wild or in ruin. Extractive industries have rendered so much of our world unnatural, left lands abandoned or ruined. But as Warren Cariou discerns, we must learn to recognize the "sensory skills and the teachings" material forms have to offer *as they are*.[168] The earth is not beyond our care—no matter how it might seem. Care is integral to education and the heart of garden work. Care empowers a renewed vision of the commons in the wake of colonial ecocide and genocide. Cree poet Erica Violet Lee writes:

> Wastelands are spaces deemed unworthy of healing because of the scale and amount of devastation that has occurred there. Wastelands are named wastelands by the ones responsible for their devastation. Once they have devastated the earth—logged the forest bare, poisoned the water, turned our neighbourhoods into brownfields so that we must grow our vegetables in pots about the ground—once they have consumed all that they believe to be valuable, the rest is discarded. But the heart of wastelands theory is simple. Here, we understand that there is nothing and no one beyond healing. So we return again and again to the discards, gathering scraps for our bundles, and we tend to the devastation with destabilizing gentleness, carefulness, and softness.[169]

What Lee offers is a renewed vision for both gardens and spaces deemed unworthy of care: the back alley, vacant lot, or highway shoulder. Rich sites, perhaps, for an educational undergrowth to take root. If education is a practice of collective world-making, it is also about the work undertaken amidst ruin and in pursuit of otherwise worlds.

Daniel Heath Justice writes that of all the "vital commitments we have in this life, figuring out how to live together" is the one that takes up most of our time. Figuring out how to live together is, in part, "why we have custom, law, protocol, diplomacy, education."[170] Gardening teaches us particular ways of living together with nonhuman life and attunes us to the liveliness of nonhuman worlds. The labour of gardening fosters

---

[168] Warren Cariou, "Landsensing: Body, Territory, Relation" (presentation, Mikinaakominis/TransCanadas: Literature, Justice, Relation conference, Toronto, ON, May 24, 2017).

[169] Erica Violet Lee, "In Defence of the Wastelands: A Survival Guide," *Guts Magazine* 7 (November 30, 2016): n.p., accessed December 11, 2021, http://gutsmagazine.ca/wastelands/.

[170] Justice, *Why Indigneous Literatures Matter*, 157.

literacies that extend beyond the garden's walls. Education might draw from and be inspired both by gardens and sites of ruin as a challenge to taken-for-granted categories and inherited ways of “doing” education. As a practice, gardening is itself an education: one through which we learn about ourselves as one part of a world of earthly others. While the garden might have boundaries, its labour offers a form of open-ended education, an emergent curriculum responsive to the successes, needs, or failures happening in the garden. At its best, it might be an always-unfinished educational experiment at working toward creating better, more reciprocal worlds in which humans and nonhumans flourish together.

References

Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

Alagraa, Bedour. "The Interminable Catastrophe." *offshoot journal*. March 1, 2021. https://offshootjournal.org/the-interminable-catastrophe/.

Arango, Tim, Shaila Dewan, John Eligon, and Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs. "Derek Chauvin is Found Guilty of Murdering George Floyd." *New York Times*, Apr. 20, 2021. www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/us/chauvin-guilty-murder-george-floyd.html?searchResultPosition=10.

Armstrong, Chelsey Geralda, Jesse E. D. Miller, Alex C. McAlvay, Patrick Morgan Ritchie, and Dana Lepofsky. "Historical Indigenous Land-Use Explains Plant Functional Trait Diversity." *Ecology and Society* 26, no. 2 (2021): n.p. DOI: 10.5751/ES-12322-260206.

Arthur, Mathew. "Writing Pandemic Feels." *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* 2, nos. 1-2 (2019-2020): vi-xxiii.

Arthur, Mathew and Reuben Jentink. "Composting Settler Nationalisms." *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* 1, no. 3 (2018): 152-182. DOI: 10.22387/CAP2018.20.

Arthur, Mathew and Reuben Jentink. "Compost to Compostables: Now, What Other Figurations?" Paper presented at Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October, 2021.

Basso, Keith H. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

Belcourt, Christi. "The Revolution has Begun." In *Toward What Justice? Describing Diverse Dreams of Justice in Education*, edited by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, 113-121. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

Brook, Isis. "Making Here Like There: Place Attachment, Displacement and the Urge to Garden." *Ethics, Place and Environment* 6, no. 3 (2013): 227-234. DOI: 10.1080/1366879042000200651.

Butler, Margot Leigh. "Whadda YOU mean?: Semiotics Workshop." Lecture, Humanities 101, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, 2017.

Campbell, Claire Elizabeth. “Governing a Kingdom: Parks Canada, 1911-2011.” In *A Century of Parks Canada, 1911-2011*, edited by Claire Elizabeth Campbell, 1-20, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011.

Caporusso, Jessica. “Resisting Toxic ‘Growth’? Cultivating Good Relations amid Toxic Legacies of Green Development.” Paper presented at Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October, 2021.

Cariou, Warren. “Landsensing: Body, Territory, Relation.” Paper presented at Mikinaakominis/ TransCanadas: Literature, Justice, Relation conference, Toronto, ON, 2017.

Casey, Edward S. *The World on Edge*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017.

Cavers, Matt. “’Victoria’s Own Oak Tree’: A Brief Cultural History of Victoria’s Garry Oaks after 1843.” *BC Studies* no. 163 (Autumn 2009): 65-85.

Chayne, Kamea and Catriona Sandilands. “Catriona Sandilands: Botanical Colonialism and Biocultural Histories (ep362).” Produced by Kamea Chayne. *Green Dreamer*. June 28, 2022. Podcast, MP3 audio, 43:08, https://greendreamer.com/podcast/catriona-sandilands-queer-ecologies.

Christenhusz, Maarten J. M., Rafaël Govaerts, John C. David, Tony Hall, Katherine Borland, Penelope S. Roberts, Anne Tuomisto, Sven Buerki, Mark W. Chase, and Michael F. Fay. “Tiptoe Through the Tulips—Cultural History, Molecular Phylogenetics and Classification of *Tulipa* (Liliaceae).” *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society* 172, no. 3 (2013): 280-328. DOI: 10.1111/boj.12061.

Coleman, Daniel. *Yardwork: A Biography of an Urban Place*. Hamilton: James Street North Books, 2017.

Collins, Keith and Josh Holder. “See How Rich Countries Got to the Front of the Vaccine Line.” *New York Times*, Mar. 31, 2021. www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/03/31/world/global-vaccine-supply-inequity.html.

Compton, Wade. *Bluesprint: Black British Columbian Literature and Orature*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2001.

Conan, Michel. “From Vernacular Gardens to a Social Anthropology of Gardening.” In *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, edited by Michel Conan, 181-204. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999.

Conan, Michel. Introduction to *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, 1-16. Edited by Michel Conan. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999.

Crex Crex Collective (Hebrides, I., Ramsey Affifi, Sean Blenkinsop, Hans Gelter, Douglas Gilbert, Joyce Gilbert, Ruth Irwin, Aage Jensen, Bob Jickling, Polly Knowlton Cockett, Marcus Morse, Michael De Danann Sitka-Sage, Stephen Sterling, Nora Timmerman, and Andrea Welz). *Wild Pedagogies: Touchstones for Re-Negotiating Education and the Environment in the Anthropocene*, edited by Bob Jickling, Sean Blenkinsop, Nora Timmerman, and Michael De Danann Sitka-Sage. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-90176-3.

Crosby, Alfred W. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. 30th Anniversary edition. Westport: Praeger, 2003.

Demos, T. J. “The Agency of Fire: Burning Aesthetics.” *e-flux journal* 98 (February, 2019): n.p. Accessed November 3, 2021. www.e-flux.com/journal/98/256882/the-agency-of-fire-burning-aesthetics/.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. Translated by Martin Joughin. New York: Zone Books, 1990.

Despard, Erin and Monika Kin Gagnon. “Introduction.” *Public* 41 (2010): 7-9.

Dissident Gardens. Curated by Hetty Berens, Guus Beumer, Marten Kuijpers, Klaas Kuitenbrouwer, Maurizio Montalti, Suzanne Mulder, Marina Otero Verzier, Mark Wigley. Rotterdam: Het Nieuwe Instituut, 2018. Exhibition catalogue. https://dissidentgardens.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en.

Forbes, Jack D. *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Wétiko Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism and Terrorism*. Revised edition. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008.

Gilbert, David E. “Firescapes, Smoke, and Woe.” Hot Spots, *Fieldsights* (July 27, 2021): n.p. Accessed November 30, 2021. https://culanth.org/fieldsights/firescapes-smoke-and-woe.

Goeman, Mishuana. “From Place to Territories and Back Again: Centering Storied Land in the Discussion of Indigenous Nation-building.” *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 1, no. 1 (2008): 23-34. DOI: 10.5204/ijcis.v1i1.20.

Gray, Ros, and Suela Sheikh. “The Coloniality of Planting.” *Architectural Review* no. 1478 (February 2021): 15-17.

Grove, Richard. *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Gumbs, Alexis Pauline. *M Archive: After the End of the World*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

Haraway, Donna. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.” *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn, 1988): 575-599.

Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

Harris, Cole. “How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94, no. 1 (2004): 165-182. DOI: 10.1111/ j.1467-8306.2004.09401009.x.

Hunt, John Dixon. *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.

Irons, Ellie. “Contested Turf: Exploring Phytocentric Pedagogies with the Lawn (Re)Disturbance Laboratory.” Paper presented at Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October, 2021.

Irons, Ellie. “The Next Epoch Seed Library’s Lawn Lab: A Public Experiment in Collaboration with Seeds, Time, and Weeds.” *Media+Environment* 2, no.1 (2020): n.p. DOI: 10.1525/001c.13470.

Jarman, Derek. *Modern Nature*. London: Vintage, 2018.

Justice, Daniel Heath. “‘Go Away, Water!’ Kinship Criticism and the Decolonization Imperative.” In *Learn, Teach, Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda M. Morra, 349-371. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016.

Justice, Daniel Heath. *Why Indigneous Literatures Matter*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2018.

Keller, Evelyn Fox. *A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock*. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1983.

Kimmerer, Robin Wall. *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*. Minneapolis: Milkweed, 2013.

Kincaid, Jamaica. “In History.” *Callaloo* 20, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 620-626.

Kincaid, Jamaica. *My Garden (Book):*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.

Kincaid, Jamaica. “Sowers and Reapers.” *New Yorker* (January 22, 2001): 41-45.

Kines, Lindsay. “‘I was Wondering Why the Water Looked So Clean’: CRD's Sewage Treatment Plant Up and Running.” *Times Colonist*, Dec. 15, 2020. https://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/i-was-wondering-why-the-water-looked-so-clean-crd-s-sewage-treatment-plant-up-and-running-1.24255805.

Konsmo, Erin Marie and Karyn Recollet. “Meeting the Land(s) Where They are at.” Afterword to *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, 238-251. Edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, 2018. DOI: 10.4324/9780429505010.

Laing, Olivia. “Paradise.” In *Funny Weather: Art in an Emergency*, 126-128. New York: Norton, 2020.

la paperson. “A Ghetto Land Pedagogy: An Antidote for Settler Environmentalism.” *Environmental Education Research* 20, no. 1 (2014): 115-130. DOI: 10.1080/13504622.2013.865115.

la paperson. *A Third University is Possible*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Laughland, Oliver and Peter Beaumont. “Atlanta Massage Parlor Shootings Leave Eight Dead Including Six Asian Women.” *Guardian*, Mar. 17, 2021. www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/mar/16/atlanta-massage-parlor-shootings.

Law, John. “Making a Mess with Method1.” In *The SAGE Handbook of Social Science Methodology*, edited by William Outhwaite and Stephen P. Turner, 595-606. London: SAGE Publications, 2007. DOI: 10.4135/9781848607958.

Law, John. “What’s Wrong with a One-World World.” *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 16, no. 1 (2015): 126-139. DOI: 10.1080/1600910X.2015.1020066.

Lee, Erica Violet. “In Defence of the Wastelands: A Survival Guide.” *Guts Magazine* 7 (November 30, 2016): n.p. Accessed December 11, 2021. http://gutsmagazine.ca/wastelands/.

Le Guin, Ursula K. “The Author of the Acacia Seeds.” In *The Unreal and the Real: Selected Stories of Ursula K. Le Guin, Vol. Two: Outer Space, Inner Lands*, 265-272. Easthampton: Small Beer Press, 2012.

LeMenager, Stephanie. *Living Oil: Petroleum Culture in the American Century*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Lutz, John S. *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008.

Mah, Kai Wood. “Young Gardeners: On Gardens as Spaces of Experiential Pedagogy.” *Public* 41 (2010): 99-107.

Marker, Michael. “There is no *place of nature*; there is only the *nature of place*: Animate landscapes as methodology for inquiry in the Coast Salish territory.” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 31, no. 6 (2018): 453-464. DOI: 10.1080/09518398.2018.1430391.

Maynard, Robyn and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. *Rehearsals for Living*. Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2022.

Mastnak, Tomaz, Julia Elyachar, and Tom Boellstorff. “Botanical Decolonization: Rethinking Native Plants.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32, no. 2 (2014): 363-380. DOI: 10.1068/d13006p.

McKittrick, Katherine. “Plantation Futures.” *Small Axe* 17, no. 3 (2013): 1-15. DOI: 10.1215/07990537-2378892.

“Medicine Collective.” University of British Columbia. Accessed May 5 2022. https://lfs-iherg.sites.olt.ubc.ca/the-medicine-collective/.

Momaday, N. Scott. “The Man Made of Words.” In *The Remembered Earth: An Anthology of Contemporary Native American Literature*, edited by Geary Hobson, 162-176. Albuquerque: Red Earth Press, 1979.

Moss, Thylias. “Tarsenna’s Defiance Garden: In Which I Love to Spit.” In *Colors of Nature: Culture, Identity, and the Natural World*, edited by Alison H. Deming and Lauret E. Savoy, 284-293. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2011.

Murphy, Michelle. “What Can't a Body Do?.” *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 3, no. 1, 2017: 1-15. DOI: 10.28968/cftt.v3i1.

Myers, Natasha. “From Edenic Apocalypse to Gardens against Eden: Plants and People in and after the Anthropocene.” In *Infrastructure, Environment, and Life in the Anthropocene*, edited by Kregg Hetherington, 115-148. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019.

Myers, Natasha. “From the Anthropocene to the Planthroposcene: Designing Gardens for Plant/People Involution.” *History and Anthropology* 28, no. 3 (2017): 297-301, DOI: 10.1080/02757206.2017.1289934.

Myers, Natasha. “Gardening Otherwise: Teachings from a Pandemic Garden on Stolen Land.” Paper presented at Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON/online, October, 2021.

Myers, Natasha. “How to Grow Livable Worlds: Ten Not-So-Easy Steps.” In *The World to Come: Art in the Age of the Anthropocene*, edited by Kerry Oliver-Smith, 53-63. Gainesville: Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida, 2018.

Nir, Sarah Maslin. “How 2 Lives Collided in Central Park, Rattling the Nation.” *New York Times*, June 14, 2020; updated Oct. 14, 2020. www.nytimes.com/2020/06/14/nyregion/central-park-amy-cooper-christian-racism.html.

Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Orr, David W. *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect*. Washington: Island Press, 1994.

Owens, Louis. “Burning the Shelter.” In *Colors of Nature: Culture, Identity, and the Natural World*, edited by Alison H. Deming and Lauret E. Savoy, 211-214. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2011.

Panciroli, Elsa. “A Glimpse of when Canada's Badlands were a Lush Dinosaur Forest by the Sea.” *Guardian*, Sept. 27, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/sep/27/a-glimpse-of-when-canadas-badlands-were-a-lush-dinosaur-forest-by-the-sea.

Pavord, Anna. *The Tulip: The Story of a Flower that has Made Men Mad*. London: Bloomsbury, 1999.

Pojar, Jim and Andy MacKinnon (Editors). *Plants of Coastal British Columbia: Including Washington, Oregon, & Alaska*. Revised edition. Edmonton: Lone Pine Pub, 2004.

Pollan, Michael. *Second Nature: A Gardener’s Education*. New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991.

Rosaldo, Renato. “Imperialist Nostalgia.” *Representations* no. 26 (Spring, 1989): 107-122.

Rose, Deborah Bird. “Shimmer: When All You Love is Being Trashed.” In *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, edited by Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, and Nils Bubandt, G51-G63. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Sandilands, Catriona, and Bruce Erickson. *Queer Ecologies: Sex Nature Politics Desire*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

Schulz, Kathryn. “Cat Tales.” Review of *The Snow Leopard* by Peter Matthiessen. *New Yorker* (July 12 & 19, 2021): 74-80.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. “Indigenous Resistance Lifts the Veil of Colonial Amnesia.” *Geeze* (Winter, 2014): 13-15.

Simpson, Mike. “The Lekwungen Food System: Novelty, Restoration, and Decolonization.” *The Changing Nature Project* (blog). 2015. https://changingnatureproject.weebly.com/lekwungen-food-systems.html.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang. Introduction to *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, 1-23. Edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang. New York: Routledge, 2018. DOI: 10.4324/9780429505010.

Smith, Malinda S. "Gender, Whiteness, and 'other Others' in the Academy." In *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century*, edited by Sherene Razack, Malinda S. Smith, and Sunera Thobani, 37-58. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010.

Snaza, Nathan and Julietta Singh. "Dehumanist Education and the Colonial University." *Social Text* 39, no. 1 (2021): 1-19. DOI: 10.1215/01642472-8750064.

St. Denis, Jen. "Tent Cities Aren't Going Away. Why Not Provide Sanctioned Sites?" *Tyee*, Aug. 7, 2020. https://thetyee.ca/News/2020/08/07/Tent-Cities-Sanctioned-Sites/.

Stengers, Isabelle. "The Cosmopolitical Proposal." Translated by Liz Carey-Libbrecht. In *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, edited by Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, 994-1003. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004.

Stern, Lesley. "A Garden or a Grave? The Canyonic Landscape of the Tijuana-San Diego Region." In *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, edited by Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, and Nils Bubandt, G17-G29. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Storfjell, Troy (@storfjta). "Indigeneity is an analytic, not an identity. Sámi is an identity. Kanaka Maoli is an identity. Lakota and Anishinabe and Puyallup are identities. Indigeneity describes a certain set of relationships to colonialism, anticolonialism and specific lands and places.," Twitter, January 19, 2021. https://twitter.com/storfjta/status/1351770335851364352.

Styres, Sandra. "Literacies of Land: Decolonizing Narratives, Storying, and Literature." In *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, 24-37. New York: Routledge, 2018. DOI: 10.4324/9780429505010.

TallBear, Kim. "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry" (Research Note). *Journal of Research Practice* 10, no. 2 (2014): Article N17.

Tennant, Zoe. "Virtual Nature Walk Offers 'Another Way to Connect to Our Homelands.'" *CBC Radio* online. Last modified April 24, 2020. https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/how-indigenous-people-are-making-connections-and-finding-support-during-covid-19-pandemic-1.5542924/virtual-nature-walk-offers-another-way-to-connect-to-our-homelands-1.5544044.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. “Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective.” *Progress in Geography* 6 (1974): 211-252.

Tuck, Eve. “Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities.” *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no.3 (2009): 409-427.

Tuck, Eve and K. Wayne Yang. “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor.” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1-40.

Tuck, Eve, Marcia McKenzie, and Kate McCoy. “Land Education: Indigenous, Post-colonial, and Decolonizing Perspectives on Place and Environmental Education Research.” *Environmental Education Research* 20, no. 1 (2014): 1-23. DOI: 10.1080/13504622.2013.877708.

Twist, Arielle. *Disintegrate/Dissociate*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2019.

Walcott, Rinaldo. *On Property*. Windsor: Biblioasis, 2021.

Wekker, Gloria. *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

Wolschke-Bulmahn, Joachim. Introduction to *Nature and Ideology: Natural Garden Design in the Twentieth Century*, 1-9. Edited by Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1997.

Zeiger, Melissa. “’Modern Nature’: Derek Jarman’s Garden.” *Humanities* 6, no. 2 (2017). DOI: 10.3390/h6020022.

Zembylas, Michalinos. “Risks and Pleasures: A Deleuzo-Guattarian Pedagogy of Desire in Education.” *British Educational Research Journal* 33, no. 3 (2007): 331-347.