Feature articles on geographical concepts of space and place
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EDITOR: Grant Kleeman

Editorial........................................................................................................................................ 2
Workshop Report............................................................................................................................. 4
Asia Pacific Regional Geographical Olympiad................................................................. 5
Geography Big Week Out 2011 ............................................................................................. 7
AGTA National Conference 2013 .........................................................................................13
National Geography World Championship .................................................................14
Space: moving beyond spatial science to engage Australian students with Asian Geography........................................................................................................ 15
Gender Equality: women’s rights.......................................................................................... 24
Place Writing: narratives, experience and identities...................................................... 33
Regional Economies and the place of tourism................................................................. 49
Advice to contributors............................................................................................................. 54

Cover: “Inside Australia” an installation by Antony Gormley (2002), Lake Ballard WA. Photo by Amanda Slater. Source: Flickr.com
This issue is the Geography Bulletin is first for 2012 and the first to be published electronically. The shift to electronic publishing has a number of advantages. These include:

- significant savings, especially in terms of the resources devoted to printing and postage. This will enable the Association to hold membership fees at the current level for a number of years;
- reduced the Association’s carbon and water footprints;
- the ability to increase the extent of each issue;
- the ability to publish every edition in full colour; and
- issues can be published in a way that facilitates the downloading of specific articles.

We hope you find the new publishing format convenient. Your feedback is welcome.

In this issue we feature two scholarly articles by Nick Hutchinson. These have been written to inform the development and implementation of the Australian Geography Curriculum. Nick has examined two of the geographical concepts central to the new curriculum – space and place.

In the first of these articles, Space: Moving Beyond the Spatial, Nick examines the concept of relational space and capacity to liberate geography teachers in their quest to better understand the relationship between people and the environment. In the second, Place Writing: Narratives, Experience and Identity, Nick explores the complexity of place.

Nick argues that place is a rich geographical concept that “fires the geographical imagination”. He explores the concept’s complexity by examining theory, or ‘grand narratives’, as well as stories that people tell about place; the experience of place; and place and identity as people invest their surroundings with meaning and can develop a sense of place.

Also featured in this issue are articles by Susan Bliss and David Hamper. Sue contributes an article Gender Equality: Women’s Rights while David looks at Regional Economies and the Place of Tourism.

2012 Institute of Australian Geographers Conference

The IAG’s 2012 Conference is being held at Macquarie University, Sydney, on 2–4 July. This is a great opportunity for Geography teachers to engage with Australia’s leading academic geographers. The Conference program is designed to encourage wide participation from secondary Geography teachers. It will feature a number of education-focused sessions.

The Conference’s theme, Inspiring Connections, encourages participants to focus on both existing connections that inspire their work, and the ways in which geographical research, education and engagement inspires new connections of value to society and the planet.
The Conference program will include opportunities to make connections between Geography and education, Geography and the arts (with keynote performances and events) and Geography and others (with an invitation for sessions and papers that step outside the conventional frames of academic Geography to consider connections across boundaries in various ways).

Participation from academic and professional geographers, Geography teachers and graduate students is encouraged.

IAG Study Groups and others will host themed sessions. A draft program will be available early May and updated regularly.

Registration: Early-bird registration will close Friday April 27, and full conference registration will close Monday June 25.

Submission of abstracts for papers to be presented must be completed online no later than Friday March 30.

Conference Program

Sunday July 1 Pre-conference workshops and fieldtrips
Monday July 2 Conference welcome; paper sessions and plenaries; evening reception
Tuesday July 3 Paper sessions and plenaries; conference dinner
Wednesday July 4 Paper sessions and plenaries
Thursday July 5 Post-conference fieldtrips

Enquiries can be directed to:
    Email: julie@conferenceonline.com.au
    Email: richie.howitt@mq.edu.au
    For more information go to: http://www.iag2012.com.au/
HSIE teachers gathered on a beautiful spring afternoon at Parramatta Park on 12th October 2011. They enjoyed a tour of Old Government House, led by Brian Powyer, Volunteer Guide for National Trust, and they were treated to a delicious afternoon tea put on by Lachlan’s Restaurant. Then they headed off on a delightful walk through the park led by Verena Mauldon, Parramatta Park Trust Curator. Verena shared her wealth of knowledge about the historical and geographical features of the park.

This was followed by presentations by Christopher Levins, Parramatta Park Trust Director, and Brian Powyer giving us the background of the Parramatta Park Education Resource and the World Heritage status of Old Government House and Domain.

Sue Field, the GTA Project Manager for the Parramatta Park Education Resource, introduced the resource to teachers and highlighted the place of the resource in the Geography and History syllabuses. Sue Clunie, Visitor Services Co-ordinator for Parramatta Park Trust, informed participants that the resource is available online on the Parramatta Park website at – www.ppt.nsw.gov.au in the ‘Education’ section. Teachers at the workshop received a hard copy version plus other materials to support the resource. Teachers were encouraged to provide feedback to Sue Field after they have looked carefully at the resource.

The Parramatta Park Education Resource was then officially launched by Christopher Levins and everyone who had contributed to the success of the project was congratulated. Nick Hutchinson, President GTA NSW, thanked Parramatta Park Trust and praised the project team. He emphasised the suitability of the resource with the introduction of the National Geography Curriculum.

Participants had the opportunity to network over refreshments provided by the Parramatta Park Event Centre.

Teachers are encouraged to check out the resource on the Parramatta Park Trust website. If you would like a hard copy of the resource, contact Sue Clunie at the Trust.
Australia has triumphed at the 2011 Asia Pacific Regional Geography Olympiad in Mérida, Mexico, with the highest team score in the Olympiad.

Sitting in exam formation before the first test of the Olympiad was really nerve wracking. However, as I skimmed over the paper and tried to attempt it, I realised that it was actually quite interesting as it tested all of the skills and techniques we had learned across a broad range of areas. We were made to apply our geographical knowledge to challenging questions that required not only the theory but a sense of how the earth functioned as a whole. All in all, a difficult but entertaining test.

On Tuesday we all travelled south to visit the Hacienda de Sotuta Péon to learn about Mayan Culture. After boarding a “train” led by Jesus and his mule Chitzo, we arrived at a typical traditional Mayan house, owned by a Mayan called Antonio (who was only 4 ft tall). Following his interesting comments on Mayan architecture and buildings and many photos, we moved on to visit a sinkhole. This beautiful, underwater cenote was freshwater and amazing to see, and we were even allowed to swim in it. This refreshing swim in the middle of the Mexican summer was great fun for everyone to enjoy. We were then shown the different stages of rope making from sisal (or henequen) in Mexico, and also the Spanish influence on their colonial buildings. After enjoying a Mexican/Mayan lunch, we returned to Mérida. This great insight into Mayan culture was both interesting and fun, providing one of the highlights of the trip.

The students sat the next test late that afternoon. This unusual arrangement was to take advantage of the relatively cooler mornings for outside activities.

In the multiple-choice test, students answer questions related to photo interpretation, maps, graphs and tables. It is worth 20% of the final score. This component of the competition was perhaps the most simple. Unfortunately this did not mean it was easy. As a team we found this part quite challenging as it required a large range of practical geographic applications.

Thursday was completely taken up by the fieldwork exercise with students in the field in the morning and early afternoon and returning to Mérida for a related test conducted in the classroom later in the afternoon.

The fieldwork test, worth 40% of our overall score, was easily the most challenging and the longest of the three tests. Having been kept in the dark about the nature of test we were all surprised to hear we were studying the town of Izamal, a town two hours from Mérida. This town has been around since the early 5th century AD. Our challenge was to complete five sections of questions and tasks around Izamal, including relating to sites centred on two Mayan...
Pyramids and a church. Working through the heat of the day, each team of four students – mixed amongst each of the five nationalities – worked hard to successfully complete each of the five sections and a final map of Izamal. This day was not just challenging but exciting as we were able to learn about Mexican culture. The test in the afternoon, allowed us to see how much knowledge we had retained and could use. This was the most enjoyable of the three tests and we all had great fun. Jono

On Thursday the students toured the iconic Mexican archaeological site of Chichén Itzá.

For one of our excursions we went to Chichén Itzá, an ancient city near Mérida. As we had finished all the exams, we were all feeling relieved and ready to look at how the Mayans once lived. The main pyramid was spectacular and the special thing about it was how the acoustics worked. We stood at the centre of one of the sides and clapped and an echo came back with a buzzing sound. The whole city was amazing with its ball court, temples, cenoté, and other buildings whose scale and size could be one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Jono

The Cultural Function was held that evening.

This particular night has a reputation for being the highlight of the Olympiad, and 2011 didn’t disappoint. The five countries all displayed key ideas about their unique cultures and expressed these through dance, activities such as rope making (Mexico) and quizzes (Australia). Many little souvenirs we shared amongst the countries such as vegemite and little sombreros and the audience was always involved in the entertaining displays. Although this wasn’t a competition, I believe the Taiwanese boys were the most amusing in their interpretation of the girls’ dance video that was popular in Taiwan. Laura

Students had free time to explore Mérida next day, with the important Medal Ceremony and Farewell Dinner in the evening. After the Olympiad, the Australian students went to Mexico City where they visited the historic centre and the world-class National Museum of Anthropology, and took a tour to the Teotihuacan pyramids. Much to the delight of the students, unlike at Chichén Itzá, you are still permitted to climb the Pyramid of the Moon and part-way up the Pyramid of the Sun.

Mexico City is a unique blend of Spanish Colonial influence. The money of a rising city, the smells and traffic of the capital - and yet Mexico is a developing country. We arrived in Mexico City in the morning and the first thing we noticed was the infamous smog, which gives Mexico City the reputation as the most polluted city in the world. Eager to make the most of the city rich in culture, after dropping our bags at our apartment, we walked to the central square – “Plaza of the Constitution”, and visited the city’s magnificent cathedral. We proceeded through the centre of the city and passed another cultural icon, The Palace of Arts, a fine example of Art Nouveau architecture. That evening we dined at Café de Tucuba. The next morning after a visit to the Mexico Anthropology Museum we went on a bus tour of the city. Thankfully this was a double-decker tourist bus rather than the city’s dilapidated bus transport. This tour displayed parts of the city that would be mistaken for a European city. It wasn’t until the next morning on our way to the Teotihuacan pyramids that we saw the other side to the city. It is this contrast that gives Mexico City its distinct character. Tarang

Our second day in Mexico City we went to the National Museum of Anthropology. It was a Sunday and the street was closed off for a big Disney Fun Run in the park where the Museum was. Having been to Chichén Itzá, the Mayan section was very interesting, as we could picture the similarities of the Meso-American Civilisations, with their gods, rituals and even architecture. After looking at many cultures including the Aztecs we met up with the Taiwanese Team for lunch. Bridget

And we’ll leave it to Laura to sum up the experience:

Travelling across the world to compete in the Olympiad was truly an amazing experience. I met some unforgettable people who showed me their culture and way of life which was an eye-opening experience within itself. Viewing the country Mexico was wonderful and I thoroughly enjoyed all the time I spent and with the people what were a part of the Asia Pacific Regional Olympiad. Laura

To give your students a chance to experience the 2013 International Geography Olympiad in Kyoto, Japan, enter your Year 11s (and Year 10s over 16 y.o) in the 2012 Australian competition. The 2012 Olympiad is being held in Cologne, Germany, with Australia’s team selected from the 2011 Geography’s Big Week Out.

Younger students get the opportunity to represent Australia at the National Geographic World Championships.

Kathryn Berg
Competition Coordinator, admin@rgsq.org.au
The 2011 Geography’s Big Week Out was held from 2 to 7 October on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria. The 16 participating students had won their places through outstanding performances in the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition. On offer was selection into the team which will represent Australia at the International Geography Olympiad in Cologne, Germany, 21-27 August 2012.

The students arrived in Melbourne on Sunday 2 October:

First up we went to Eureka Tower, the highest tower in the Southern Hemisphere let alone Melbourne. After ascending over 80 floors, we were able to take a full circle view over Melbourne. In small groups, we walked around the tower taking observations of Melbourne, what had changed and what was currently happening. This was great for providing us with background information about Melbourne and it gave us a glimpse of what else was to follow during the week. Anthony

After our Melbourne Orientation experience in the Eureka Tower’s “Skydeck” we made our way to Federation Square which over its short lifespan has evolved to be a significant social focal point. We then boarded the City Circle Tram, a free tourist service (which therefore is always overcrowded). Enroute it gave us a narrated tour of Melbourne and some of the background history which was quite fascinating. With a short stop in the Docklands to have a look at an example of urban renewal we continued around to the Carlton Gardens and after drawing a sketch map we were on our way down to the Peninsula. Daniel

After travelling to Blairgowrie we settled into a comfortable group accommodation lodge, and continued work after dinner with a briefing on the next day’s activity.

On our first morning on the Peninsula, we drove to Arthur’s Seat to draw a field sketch. This vantage point provided breath-taking views of Port Phillip Bay and the adjacent suburbs of Rosebud, Tootgarook, Rye, Blairgowrie, Sorrento and Portsea. Aside from the beautiful view, this activity was a really great way to commence our time on the Mornington Peninsula as it provided us with an opportunity to get our bearings and to establish a special understanding of the area in which we would be working. Lucinda

Next, we were lucky enough to visit the Mornington Shire Council office, where we were given talks by guest speakers, Council CEO Dr Michael Kennedy and Strategic Planning Manager Allan Cowley. These speakers gave us an insight into how the Mornington Peninsula was run, and the problems the Shire faced when planning for the future of the region.

Below: Students at the Eureka Tower’s “Skydeck”
They really showed us the importance of town planning and the possible career directions geography could take us in the future. A few councilors – Antonella Celi, David Gibb and Bill Goodrem – were kind enough to sacrifice their time to discuss the area with us over a great lunch supplied by the Shire. It was an interesting visit, and a great starting point for us to base the remainder of our fieldwork on.

Aleks

In the afternoon the students began their river studies at the source of Main Creek – struggling through the undergrowth to take measurements.

The Main Creek Study was a chance to really get into the activity. If you weren’t feeling the chill of the Peninsula’s weather yet, this was the perfect opportunity to get your feet wet and freezing. Whether it was using dog biscuits and oranges to find out the speed of the creek’s flow, or measuring the wetted perimeter and dimensions of the creek’s shape, most were brave enough to get into the water for a bit of fun. Everyone also had a chance to do some sampling and tests on the creek’s water condition at different points of the creek with Lisa Kordus, a Waterwatch coordinator with Melbourne Water. Observing the surrounding vegetation was interesting as well as seeing the changes at different spots down the creek. Everyone learned something new here and it was also a good time to bond through team work.

Carmen

Tuesday morning started with an early visit to the Peninsula Hot Springs.

The Peninsula Hot Springs was a great activity that we were lucky enough to enjoy, and I speak for many in saying it was one of the highlights of the trip. These man-made pools of water are filled every morning with 38-42EC water that is naturally warmed by a geothermal zone in the earth’s crust. As there is no natural surface spring, the water is extracted from an artesian bore on the premises. It is later pumped back into the ground so the use is sustainable. Relaxing in these hot pools of water was a welcome escape from the intense field work and long debriefs that we had been experiencing, and gave us a chance to enjoy one of the Mornington Peninsula’s most renowned tourist attractions. Apart from enjoying the water temperature we were also able to gain an insight into the functions and difficulties of running a developing tourism venture by talking with the business manager.

Nicholas F

Most of the day was then taken up with comparing the sand dune systems on Rosebud Beach and St Andrews Beach. This included measuring dune transects using very sophisticated GPS units – lent by Ultimate Positioning, along with Jamie Portman and Naomi Witham to teach us how to use them.

On Tuesday, the group undertook studies of the sand dunes at Rosebud and St Andrews Beach. The field work involved vegetation transects and the collection of abiotic data such as wind speed and height above sea level. We took away from this study a greater appreciation of how the human population can impact native ecosystems. The dune system

Below: Dune study at Rosebud Beach
at Rosebud was significantly degraded due to the extensive 
human activity in the area. In contrast, the dune system 
at St Andrews Beach was more natural and relatively 
untouched. It was great to be able to apply the theory I had 
learned in the classroom in such a beautiful place. Rhys

On the way back to the accommodation, the students 
shopped for the international cooking competition, a 
favourite tradition of Big Week Out. The Mexican and Thai 
groups cooked the first night while the other half of the 
students prepared a presentation on the dunes. The next 
night the Italian and Indian cooks provided the feast, while 
the other students prepared their residential and retail 
presentations.

Later than afternoon we boarded Storm Bay for a great trip on 
Port Phillip Bay. Its captain, Tim Phillips from the Wooden Boat 
Shop in Sorrento, was a mine of local information.

The sailing was a real highlight of the trip, as it was both 
incredibly interesting and enjoyable to experience. We boarded 
a 1920s fishing smack in Sorrento to experience Portsea, Point 
Nepean, and the Rip from a different perspective, all with a 
running commentary from our captain Tim. We saw a variety 
of wildlife, ranging from some dolphins swimming alongside 
the boat to a seal jumping out of the water as it struggled with 
a large fish, as well as some of the most expensive houses in 
Australia, and the old quarantine station and leper colony, not 
to mention the staggering coastline of Point Nepean National 
Park. It was also a great time to get to know some of the other 
students; the sailing being more laid back than the intensive 
fieldwork activities we had completed over the previous few 
days. Overall, it was a very entertaining experience.

Four teams, four different cuisines, a shopping trip to 
Woolworths, a budget of $180, held over two nights, let 
the battle commence. The international cooking challenge 
was definitely a highlight for me as everyone’s culinary 
skills were put to the test and our creativity was tested. In 
my group (Thai) the two girls took charge and the boys 
diligently followed our instructions, with some help, in how 
to julienne carrots, grill chicken and cut an onion. Overall 
it was good fun and there were no kitchen disasters with 
all teams producing some very fine tasting (and looking) 
food. While each team were certain they were going to win, 
Team Italy were announced the winners. Sarah N

On Wednesday each student surveyed five houses, in both 
Rosebud West and Sorrento, as well as examining the retail 
areas. We also did overall neighbourhood assessments, 
and compared the data accumulated in the field with 
our expectations of the two areas. We developed these 
expectations from examining a variety of statistics, graphs 
and maps prior to entering the field. It was surprising for the 
group to realise that our preconceived notions of Rosebud 
and Sorrento were, in fact, incorrect in many areas. We spoke 
with Kathy Hefferman from Mornington Peninsula Shire’s 
Rosebud West Community Renewal Program, who discussed 
many plans in place for Rosebud. It was an engaging and 
interesting activity, which challenged many of the group’s 
misconceptions, and made us think about how we judge 
areas sight unseen, and are often incorrect. Kate

Thursday morning we conducted more river studies, this time 
on Balcombe Creek. This flows through more developed areas 
than Main Creek and so provided a useful comparison.

On Thursday afternoon we cycled through the beautiful 
Point Nepean National Park. The cycling itself was very 
tough, with lots of hills and steep sections, but it was worth 
it as the views over Port Phillip Bay and Bass Strait were 
spectacular! We stopped along the way at some historical 
sites, such as Fort Nepean, Pearce Barracks and the site of
the disappearance of former Prime Minister Harold Holt. The scenery was breathtaking and although most of us felt very sore afterwards, it was a lot of fun and definitely one of the highlights of the week. Sarah G

For dinner on the final night we went to a local restaurant. During the week we drew out the name of another student and while we were doing the retail studies, purchased clothes from an op-shop for that student to wear at our final dinner on Thursday night. We all tried to keep the name of our student secret as we searched the op-shop for the oldest, brightest and daggiest clothes for them to wear. On Thursday night we revealed who our lucky recipients were and clad in our new clothes we enjoyed a beautiful dinner in a restaurant at Blairgowrie overlooking the bay. With such a strange array of clothing on display, we received lots of funny looks from fellow diners! Special mention must be made of Carmen for her bright pink outfit, Aleks for her incredibly daggy jumper and skirt, Nick B for looking like he had come from the 80s, and Shirley for her new handbag. It was a great night and lots of fun! Sarah G

I believe that I can speak on behalf of everyone when I say that we were pleasantly surprised with the variety and quality of the food that we enjoyed during the week. On Monday night after a day of trekking through creeks we were treated with pizza which was followed by pavlova. Over the following two nights we enjoyed the food prepared by the four International Cook Off groups: Thai, Italian, Mexican and Indian. I think that of all the people, Aleks enjoyed the Mexican the most due to her love of jalapeños and all foods spicy! As Thursday night was our last night together as a group we went out to a local Italian restaurant all decked out in our Op Shop clothes. I think we were all overwhelmed by the size of the dishes we were presented with. Eating out at a restaurant was a great way to spend our last night together. Brodie

Back from dinner, the students were presented with letters from the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, and their official certificates. This was followed by a fun quiz.

On the last night the students were divided into four teams, with the teachers in a single team. The quiz was seven rounds long, each round consisting of 10 questions that challenged students’ knowledge of Australia and the rest of the world and one clue to the baffler. In the end, the competition was extremely close. Kath announced that the “Pink Ladies” (made up of three girls and one boy) had drawn with the “Jalapenos” with a score of 63, followed extremely closely by another team and embarrassingly the teachers on 62, and “Team” on 61. However it turned out that apparently Kath had made a mistake in the adding up (she blamed tiredness) and maybe the Jalapenos had won after all. Nick B

The final morning the students sat a test.

The test was a measurement of the skills we learnt during the week. It lasted for 2 hours and was part of the selection process for the team of 4 that’s going to Cologne, Germany for the Geography Olympiad. The test was pretty interesting. It wasn’t too hard, but it required you to think a lot. I certainly believe it was a good test for the selection of the team. It really drew upon the skills that would be required in Germany. Rob

After the test was over we departed for the airport and home, travelling via the Sorrento-Queenscliff ferry and thus completing our circumnavigation of Port Phillip Bay.

What makes a camp amazing, and not just good, isn’t so much the things you do and the places you go, but the people you share those experiences with; and I can safely say that the people at the Big Week Out made the week exceptional. Even though we were all from different parts of Australia and had different interests, we all managed to fit in together through our common love of Geography. It wasn’t just the students who made the week special, but the organisers who made it possible, the fantastic teachers who challenged us and pushed our knowledge of Geography, and the people who gave up their time to teach us about their jobs and the area. Aleks

The students who enjoyed it all so much were:
Nick Booth, Pembroke School, Adelaide
Laura Butler, Penrith High School, Sydney
Anthony Chen, Radford College, Canberra
We’ll leave it to Oliver to sum up the experience:

I found GBWO to be a fantastic opportunity to both learn a lot more about Geography as a whole, and to meet other like-minded people. The program itself was very well put together, and balanced intensive Geography fieldwork with recreation appropriately, excellently showcasing the Mornington Peninsula. The program allowed for a lot of freedom of thought, rather than dictating our opinions as school Geography courses have a tendency to do. The fieldwork and talks by various officials and groups allowed everyone to formulate their own views, and to share their own ideas with each other, encouraging some very high levels of analysis from all. The BWO was thus immensely enjoyable, both through the activities we undertook, and through how it allowed for a degree of individuality and creativity within our work, presenting a very new, yet professional way of studying the Mornington Peninsula. This combination, along with some very smooth management, as well as the intelligent and likable other students, helped make the week a very enjoyable and memorable one.

To give your students the opportunity to benefit from the 2012 Geography’s Big Week Out, enter your Year 10/11 students (16 years or over on 31 August 2012) in the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition.

Kath Berg
Competition Coordinator
admin@rgsq.org.au
ph 07 3368 2066
As you may know, the draft of the Australian Curriculum: Geography was released by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on Thursday 20 October, 2011. With the final Australian Curriculum: Geography documents to be published in October 2012, the conference will be a great opportunity to gain new insights and ideas to assist schools with implementing the new Australian Geography Curriculum. With these developments we believe the conference theme, ‘AGTA 2013 – Geography’s New Frontier’, aptly describes the opportunities the new curriculum will offer geographical educators. Perth and Western Australia offers you the opportunity to explore these new frontiers.

The four-day event is to be held at Perth College between Monday 7 to Thursday 10 January, 2013. International and Australasian Geography teachers and academics are invited to attend the conference to participate in a stimulating education program of keynotes, workshop presentations and field trips. All participants will be provided with a range of free resources and materials including all AGTA Conference keynote and workshop materials.

We anticipate an unprecedented attendance at the conference in response to the need for professional learning as a result of the requirements of the new F-12 Geography Curriculum.

An exciting social program will also available, highlighting some of the best of Western Australia. Pre conference tours, (2–5 January), a Swan Valley tour, (6 January) and Conference Dinner are all being planned.

The biennial AGTA Conference is the premier school geography educator’s professional learning event in Australia. AGTA 2013 will be a pivotal and crucial event in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Geography. We encourage you to set aside these dates in January 2013 to attend AGTA 2013. We welcome all Geography teachers to participate in this watershed event for school Geography.

Details of AGTA 2013 and expressions of interest forms are available on the AGTA website at www.agta.asn.au/conf2013/. We plan for on-line registrations to be open by April 2012. The AGTA website at www.agta.asn.au will provide regular program updates and other information related to registration.

The AGTA 2013 committee looks forward to your participation.

For further information contact either Darryl Michie, AGTA 2013 Conference Convenor – agta2013@iinet.net.au or Malcolm McInerney, AGTA Chair – manning@chariot.net.au
Australia's team is selected from the intermediate and junior levels of the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition via the Final for under 16s. Representing Australia were:

- Michael Gu, Melbourne Grammar School
- Riley Kernaghan, MacGregor State High School, Brisbane
- Jesse Tong, Brisbane Grammar School

Competing in the National Geographic World Championship were teams of students 16 years old and younger from: Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Taiwan, UK and USA. The interaction with students from diverse countries is as important as the tests or exploring the host city.

All teams completed a written test and then a second test held at San Francisco Zoo which included map reading and geographical questions on places and environments related to the animals the students could see. On the basis of these two tests, Russia, Taiwan and Canada made it through to the final. Australia came fourth, tying with the United States.

The final was held at Google headquarters in nearby Mountain View. Russia took out first place, with Canada second and Taiwan third. All the teams then had lunch in a Google staff cafeteria (an experience in itself) followed by a tour and presentations on aspects of Google Earth and Google Maps. It was interesting to hear about their work on disaster response and the diplomatic challenges of some geopolitical boundaries, and fun for some students to take a ride in a Street View car.

However, perhaps the most interesting part was seeing how Google's corporate culture worked in practice: multiple free cafeterias which specified every ingredient of the food and the cooking method, with recyclable, compostable or reusable containers; staff playing pool or volleyball because it was good to have a break and come back refreshed to work; bicycles (in Google colours) everywhere for staff to use to go between the many buildings on the extensive grounds.

The students also visited Point Reyes. The visitors' centre is located in the San Andreas Fault Zone, and the students walked a trail with a park ranger to see evidence of the 1906 earthquake. The land to the east is on the North American Plate, and Point Reyes itself is on the Pacific Plate. The weather can be quite different as well with the ridge immediately to the west of the San Andreas Fault Zone blocking the fogs that affect Point Reyes – and San Francisco as well during our stay – from spreading farther inland. On the way back to San Francisco, we visited Muir Woods to see the impressive coastal redwoods.

There was some free time during the programme and during these periods, the Australian team visited the California Academy of Sciences Museum and the Cable Car Museum, rode the cable cars (though the queues were so long that was a struggle), strolled along Fishermans Wharf, caught a bus over the Golden Gate Bridge, and much more, including attending a baseball match. We went to the game with the Taiwanese and UK teams. The local team, the San Francisco Giants, is a top US team and their ballpark is said to be one of the best in the country. The Taiwanese are right into baseball, but the rest of us were bewildered at times by the rules and all the abbreviations on the scoreboard. That's probably how other people feel when they watch cricket! It was interesting to experience this part of US culture.

The food was also part of the San Francisco experience, starting with American breakfasts with not only what Australians would eat for breakfast but adding in waffles, pancakes and sweet pastries. Lunches ranged from hotdogs at the baseball to organic wholefood meals purchased by weight. Dinners reflected the diverse elements that make up San Francisco, e.g. Empress of China Restaurant in Chinatown, Bubba Gump Shrimp Restaurant at Fishermans Wharf, Chevy's Fresh Mex Restaurant.

One of our team, Riley Kernaghan, describes the experience:

_For me attending the National Geographic World Championship has been an exciting and great experience as I was able to meet people from all over the world and visit lots of famous places I had only every read about._

Australia's team to the 2013 National Geographic World Championship will be chosen from the 2012 and 2013 Australian competitions.

Older students are in the running for the 2013 International Geography Olympiad in Kyoto, Japan. The 2012 Olympiad is being held in Cologne, Germany, with Australia's team selected from our 2011 Competition via Geography's Big Week Out.

Kathryn Berg
Competition Coordinator
admin@rgsq.org.au
Space is one of the more important geographical ideas. It is a highly complex term that is used and understood in a variety of ways (Crang & Thrift, 2000, 1). It is most commonly thought of as a great expanse extending in all directions, a vast canvas on which geographers work to describe the earth, and an expanse that extends from personal space to the global. Within this vast space, or over portions of it, all material objects are located. This is the space of explorers, map makers, field study, and of Geographical Information System analysis. This is the patchwork quilt of landscapes, remotely-sensed city lights shimmering in the evening sky and the ever more complex communication networks that intertwine global space. This is the geographer’s palette where they work on the assumption that where things are located in space has some significance.

Space and place are often merged together in the geographical imagination but space is more abstract than place. We begin with undifferentiated expanses of space and then we identify with certain parts of space, get to know them better endow them with value, then name and identify them as places. It is people that form place. Space is a locale that is made into a place by human intent. A place is given its personality by human relationships across space. It is produced through connections to the rest of the world, particularly the movement of people but also commodities and ideas (Massey, 1991, Cresswell, 2004).

Massey (1994) pointed out that industrial restructuring plays out differently in places, as, for example, in Toyota City, Shanghai or Gurgaon. Effectively she identified places as relational portions of space. Such places do not have single identities but multiple ones. They are not frozen in time, they are processes, that involve the imprint of people, and, paradoxically, such places are not enclosures with a clear inside and outside, they rather link to flows and interconnections. Some places can ‘dissolve’ from space. Others can be subject to ‘perpetual perishing.’ They are contingent on the processes across space that create, sustain and dissolve them (Harvey, 1996, 261).

Absolute space

Absolute space, space as the great container of things leads us to study the reasons for the location of phenomena, examining site and situation, spatial analysis using numerical ideas to explain location, spatial interactions that examine the interrelationships between people and place, and, spatial patterns that involve the abstract geometries of movements, flows of behaviour, networks, nodes and hierarchies spread out across space.

Subordinate concepts: absolute space, spatial patterns, location, spatial association, spatial interaction, movement, network, nodes, hierarchies

Berry and Marble (1968) expressed the goal of spatial science as ‘building accurate generalizations with predictive power by precise quantitative description of spatial distributions, spatial structure and organization, and spatial relationships’. Nystuen (1968) claimed that such generalizations could be based on just three fundamental spatial concepts: directional orientation, distance and connectedness (or relative position).

Spatial science continues to inform school Geography. In the United States the National Geography Standards (1994) assert that, ‘Geography is not just a collection of arcane information.

1. Haggett’s (1990, 23) geographical space lay ‘equidistant from the stars and the atoms … from highly localised studies (say, of a small atoll, an individual settlement or a small river basin) … through to worldwide studies’
2. Maude, (2011), personal communication
3. Tuan (1977, 8) ‘What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value’
4. Sociologist Giddens referred to a locales as not just places but settings of interaction
5. Routledge, 1997, 70) Different social groups endow space with amalgams of different meanings, uses and values. Particular places frequently become sites of conflict where the social structures and the relations power, knowledge, domination and resistance intersect.

Rather, it is the study of spatial aspects of human existence’ (18). In the UK (QCA, 2007) space is referred to as:

Understanding the interactions between places and the networks created by flows of information, people and goods

Knowing where places and landscapes are located, why they are there, the patterns and distributions they create, how and why these are changing and the implications for people.

– a twofold explanation that opens up further possibilities to examine space beyond the boundaries of spatial science and the spatial aspects of human existence. In Victoria it appears that the concepts inherent in spatial science traditions predominate. There appears to be little deviation from the concepts listed by McCaskill in 1967 (McCaskill, 1967).

**Subordinate concepts:** spatial distributions, spatial structure and organisation, spatial relationships, directional orientation, distance, relative position

### The production of (social) space

‘In school geography, the concept of space is decidedly unproblematic: space is simply where things happen (Morgan, 2000, 277). It is a container in which objects and subjects are ‘situated’ or ‘located’.

Pile & Thrift (1995) characterise this view of space which: ‘based as it is in positivism, values the neutrality of seeing; the world is turned into a set of geometrical arrangements based on an abstract, fixed, universal, isotropic and material understanding of space’.

In academic circles criticisms of spatial science focused on its attempt to construct human geography as an autonomous science of the spatial. Geographers began to emphasise the importance of incorporating social relations and processes into spatial analysis. Indeed, space began to be thought of as something that is produced by human activity. By the 1980s space was ‘seen not merely as an arena in which social life unfolds, but rather as a medium through which social relationships are produced and reproduced (Gregory & Urry, 1985, 3)’.

Geographers were indebted to the French urban theorist and philosopher, Henri Lefebvre who argued that space and society are mutually constitutive: space is both the product of social relationships and is involved in the production of those relationships (Morgan, 2000, 276). Lefebvre (1991, O’Neill, 2005) showed how the view of space as a neutral container for social relationships is an historical construction, and was related to the rise of capitalist social relationships. He pointed out that different societies have radically different conceptions of space. Lefebvre explained the concepts space in countries with advanced capitalist economies as having three interdependent social dimensions, each contributing differently to the production of space according to local conditions (Dear, 1997, 51):

- **Conceived space** is the abstract conceptions of space using a system of verbal and graphic signs (Peet, 1998, 103), is the space that planners, architects, and policy makers envision in their blueprints and plans (O’Neill, 243). It is what Lefebvre calls the structure imposed on space (Lefebvre, 1991, 369). It is a form of space that is always relative, always changing. It is the closest Lefebvre gets to the concept of absolute space (as described above)

- **Perceived space** is the sense that people have of a space, usually as they view it. Lefebvre calls this the form of space or spatial practice (369). A particular society at a particular time develops activities that “mark the earth,” leaving traces that signify to members of that society distinct uses for that space, such as “the corner of the street, a ‘marketplace’, a shopping or cultural centre” (16–17). Spatial practice enables a sense of continuity for social groups as their accumulated knowledge of space is inscribed on to an urban landscape. Lefebvre argues that designers build environments intended to visually signal a limited set of uses. Capitalism, urbanization, and other processes of modernity have all modified spatial practices. Social order, he argues, is both organized and represented in space (O’Neill, 244).

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Subordinate concepts: spatial distributions, spatial structure and organisation, spatial relationships, directional orientation, distance, relative position

### Perceived space

- In The Production of Space, he identifies the following kinds of space: absolute, abstract, appropriated, capitalist, concrete, contradictory, cultural, differentiated, dominated, dramatized, epistemological, familial, instrumental, leisure, lived, masculine, mental, natural, neutral, organic, physical, plural, political, pure, real, repressive, sensory, social, socialist, socialized, state, transparent, true and women’s space’ (Dear, 1997, 490).

- Also referred to as ‘representations of space’

- Although Lefebvre sees ‘absolute space’ slightly differently, being made up of fragments of nature located at sites which were chosen for their intrinsic qualities (cave, mountaintop, spring, river) (1991, 48)

- Shields (2004, 2010) explains, ‘that the perceived space of everyday social life and commonsensical perception blends popular action and outlook but it is often ignored in the professional and theoretical theoretical of conceived space of cartographers, urban planners or property developers’.
Lived space indicates how inhabitants and users experience and use a space. Space is directly ‘lived’ by its ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’ through associated images and symbols (Lefebvre, 1991, 39) in addition to certain writers, philosophers and artists who describe it (Lefebvre, 1991, 39). These images centre on feelings about space, space that is alien, space enshrined in myth, space that is sacred, space that is profane, space as seen by minority groups, a spaces where people like to congregate and spaces replete with emotional meaning. Lived space is linked to the underground of social life and to imagination (O’Neill, 244); it is also centred on everyday life ‘ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or: square, church, graveyard’ (Lefebvre, 1991, 42); in short, it is alive: it speaks (42).

Lefebvre’s ideas about space can be applied to the urban geography of Seoul (Hutchinson, 2002). Conceived space can be viewed through the blueprints for the city developed in the Chosun Dynasty where the gates were arranged using Feng-shui and Confucian ideology. Such a conception of space represents space in a particular fashion, working ideologically to legitimate this view of planned space.

Perceived space is illustrated by the material spatial practices, or ‘concrete’ processes, flows and movements as over 4 million commuters thread their ways through the subway system, the eighth largest in the world, leaving behind the traces of meeting places in businesses, fast food restaurants, massage parlours and transport interchanges. These spatial practices make and remake the city as a functioning urban system (Hubbard et al. 2002, 14).

The lived space of the ‘Just Blues bar’ in It’aeewon, a suburb frequented by the US military instantly transports one to southside Chicago, Namdaemun is seen by tourists as a market centre that ‘never sleeps’ but it is also a ‘lived space’. Namdaemun, to locals, is a 600 year-old gate. Destroyed by an arsonist in 2008, it has been described as the symbol that ‘holds South Koreans together’ These ‘lived spaces’ are kept alive and accessible by an art form: blues and jazz, and a popular imagination.

Subordinate concepts: socially-produced space, conceived space, spaces of representation, perceived space, spatial practice, lived space, representational space

Thirdspace

Geographer and sociologist Edward Soja in a series of influential articles and books (1985, 1989, 1996, 1999, 2000) proposed the term ‘spatiality’ to refer to the fact that space is socially produced and interpreted, and argued for the reassertion of space over time in social theory (Morgan, 2000, 276). He spoke of the ‘making of geographies’ as important ways understanding our lives and life worlds: an alternative point of view to the predominant ideas of historians and social scientists.

Soja’s profound and poetic geographies assembled a new way of understanding space and society (Minca, 2008: 138). At the same time, it is easy to see Soja’s debt to Lefebvre. Soja developed a conceptual tool that can be used to investigate the lived experiences of people and how they are affected by their environment. Thirdspace looks at three interacting urban spaces, for example: (Bustin, 2011):

- Firstspace is the built environment, including architecture, the road network, urban growth, form and function; the traditional urban geography. Spatial science is based on the quantitative and mathematical descriptions of the patterns found in Firstspace; the patterns now observed through Geographical Information Systems and remote sensing.
- Secondspace is representational space: how the area is marketed and perceived in the minds of people. These are the spaces of artists rather than engineers or scientists, the spaces of utopian urban planners seeking
social and spatial justice through enlightened idealism and these are the spaces of cognitive maps, the images that we carry with us about the spaces we occupy in our daily lives. Secondspace is conceptual and therefore can be investigated in school geography by looking at the geographical imaginings held by students.

- Thirdspace is lived space: the experience of living in the Firstspace mediated through the expectations of the Secondspace. It looks at how the Firstspace and Secondspace combine to create a lived experience. It opens up many different possibilities of exploring space and spatiality (Soja, 1996). One approach is to view space from the perspectives of those deemed out of place in an environment or place (Bustin, 2011).

Soja gave voice to the powerless within this conception of spatiality. ‘Out of place’ people, those whose viewpoints, ideas and voices are often ignored or forgotten about but who are very much part of any urban space, such as the impoverished, the homeless or the elderly were uncovered and have subsequently been the object of much study in academic geography. Soja maintains that the exploration of Thirdspace can be described and inscribed in journeys to ‘real-and-imagined’ places (2000,11).

Asian cities, real and imagined could be glimpsed through the dystopian lens of Davis Planet of Slums (2006), the more hopeful visions of Brand in City Planet or the relentless pace of change in Saunders (2010) Arrival City. Davis points out that China added more city dwellers in the 1980s than did the whole of Europe, including Russia, in the 19thc (2006, 2). However, Brand’s vision refers to squatter cities as vibrant, ‘What you see up close is not a despondent populace crushed by poverty but a lot of people busy getting out of poverty as fast as they can’ (2006, 6).

Saunders begins by describing a Chinese peasant searching for nearby herbal remedies in the local forest near the terraces his ancestor have tended over ten generations. The peasant may well still imagine the ancient stone pathway to the forest but the village is now a suburb of Chongqing at the side of a four-lane boulevard a kilometre into the city; amidst a forest of apartment towers, there unfolds a glimmering mirage of grey and brown cubes cascading across the hillside as far as the eye can see (2010). For other inhabitants of Asian cities, particularly those ‘out of place’ their inscriptions on the city are more tenuous, their imaginings yet to be developed. Rigg (2003b) points out that 70% of the street traders in Manila are migrants to the city, 50% of the saam lors (tricycle taxis) in Bangkok are driven by seasonal migrants and most of the manual construction workers in Bandung come from rural areas in Central and East Java.

For many Asian cities the real is more bizarre than the imagined. Hanoi is now ranked ahead of Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo and Seoul as the place to shop in Asia but the inner city accommodation is so congested that new inhabitants to the city rent dwellings from dispossessed farmers (Montheard, 2010). A vast shanty town north of Ulan Bator now holds one quarter of Mongolia’s population where roads are unpaved mud paths; streets have no signs, streetlights and names, and garbage piles up between the rows of tents and shacks (Gillett, 2011). Gated communities built on the fringes and in the central urban spaces of Jakarta boast a range of high class services and facilities such as self-contained golf courses, equestrian areas, shopping malls and hospitals that are only accessible to residents and their guests (McGregor, 2008, 150).

Subordinate concepts: spatiality, Firstspace, Secondspace, Thirdspace, ‘making of geographies’; ‘out of place’ people

15 There are many opportunities to study the ‘out of place’ in Asian urban areas. (Narayan et al 1999, Rigg, 2003a, Sanie & Baum, 2003)
Space: moving beyond spatial science to engage Australian students with Asian geography

Relative space

Topological space has long been recognised by geographers. Relative space can be illustrated by an examination of the famous London Underground map where the relative distances between tube stations is reasonably accurate but direction and the bends and twists of the rail tracks are obscured. Although this conception of space had been studied by geographers in the spatial science tradition other geographers that adhered to structural philosophies, predominantly Marxist philosophies, began to explain other aspects of relative space.

Harvey (1989) provides a powerful way of understanding the transformation of space within late-modernity through his description of the process of ‘time–space compression’ by which the world is made smaller through successive rounds of capitalist investment, leading to technological, social, political and, ultimately, cultural change.

Subordinate concepts: topological space, relative space, ‘time–space compression’

Space given meaning by human endeavour

Space is also constructed by people in other ways; we conceive of space differently, space is given meaning by human endeavour (Hubbard et al. 2005). The ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people think of space is important in an Australian curriculum. The spaces of traditional country have been left behind by the Ancestors and linked together by Dreaming or learning tracks (Sveiby & Skuthorp 2006) renewed through song, dance and visual art. The artists were not concerned with relative distances between places or the actual size of a site they rather referred to particular places or single events of the Dreaming. Further, distance is not generally spoken of in terms of precise measurement but in terms of people’s experience of space, for example how thirsty they were, how much they were carrying, or, the length of daylight hours. One could well imagine different conceptions of space given meaning through human interaction with their surrounds in various Asian locations.

New ways of thinking about space reinforce the conception of children’s geographies. The personal geographies of students (i.e. their personal space as identified by the places they use or are connected to is also an important considerations. There is clearly room for an educational resource resembling Living Geography: exciting futures for teachers and students (Mitchell 2009, (ed.) ) that embraces ‘young people’s geographies’ – their experiences and encounters with the world, set in the context of Australia and Asia. Each experience, whether virtual or in real time, leads to a different perception of such spaces.

Students should have opportunities to study spaces of exclusion where, as well as the young, other out of place people: the elderly, disabled and minorities perceive spaces differently - where they may experience hostility when they attempt to enter spaces that are made alien to them. Students should be afforded opportunities to engage with parts of the built environment that have also been given rich meaning through tradition, myth, language and ritual (Hubbard et al, 2005). They may ponder the extent to which settler cultures from the Asia-Pacific have become integral to these Australian spaces?

Subordinate concepts: ‘time–space compression’, space of flows, Dreaming spaces and learning tracks, personal space, virtual space, real space

Asian world cities are tied together in seemingly instantaneous communication and yet many of the spaces in between are ill-served by infrequent ship visits, inadequate internet bandwidth and jet aircraft flit across the sky on uninterrupted journeys from an Asian world city to other world cities in Australia, Europe and North America. Although the time and cost of moving commodities, people and information has been dramatically reduced through new technologies and ‘time-space compression’ there are clearly significant portions of Asian space where people are excluded from these developments. Successive waves of capitalist investment has led to the integration of Asia into global society, a skein of a tightly woven space of flows circulating similar consumer brands, images and lifestyles to the extent that local ways of life are all but annihilated by space. Geography is concerned with the ways in which some Asian places have been ignored by and others offered resistance to these powerful spatial forces (McGregor, 2008, 214–224).

Subordinate concepts: time–space compression, space of flows, Dreaming spaces and learning tracks, personal space, virtual space, real space

Notes

16 As, for example, in the Geography of Transport Networks http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/eng/ch1/en/conc1en/ch1c3en.html

17 Tokyo, Singapore, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong are ranked among the globe’s ten most important and influential world cities – the others being New York, London, Paris, Sydney and Milan (Beaverstock et al. 1999, Globalization and World Cities Research Network, 2008, Taylor et al, 2010)
Relational Space

Relational space is a complex idea. In academic geography it is made more complex because geographers examine the ways in which space is used to deconstruct language, the ways in which space undergirds many disparate philosophies and the contributions of spatial concepts to the social theories that intrigue many human geographers. This is made ever more difficult because the authors of these theories, and the readers of them, cannot maintain a neutral position outside what is depicted; there is no way, according to this point of view, of standing apart from this world to dispassionately reduce space or spatiality to simply held concepts.

Geographers have alluded to fine arts and space: the space of impressionist paintings and random streams of smoke, sunlight, steam and clouds (Gibson-Graham, 1997, 317) giving way to much more open and fluid theories of space. Lefebvre saw an artistic revolution, initiated by cubism, heralding new ideas about space (Smith, 2004, 21). Indeed, Lefebvre explained that around 1910 predominant ideas about space were shattered. Gone was the space, according to Smith, of common sense, political control, Euclidean geometry, Renaissance perspectivism, Newtonian physics and descriptive geographies (21). For the last forty years contemporary geographers have been engaged in theorising a new relational space.

Smith (2008, 92) explains that the common sense view of space that flows from Newtonian physics is an instinctive one in Western societies, space, as a field, as a container, or as simple emptiness16. Other notions of space preceded this one including a pre-Capitalist view of space where land is not a parcel to be bought and sold. Here space is seen in terms of social relations. People belong to the land. The land is looked after by the group and this space is imbued with spirits, the histories of the group. It contains sacred places17.

But it was the ‘Cartesian spatial order’ with its associated grids, coordinates, binaries and hierarchies (Genocchio, 1995: 35) that underpinned Western philosophy before the development of critical contemporary geographies over the last thirty to forty years. Inside this spatial order, space was the mere backdrop against which life is played out (Mitchell, 2000: 215). To think about relational space one has to think more deeply about the production of space in an attempt to uncover how space is given meaning through human endeavour (Hubbard et al, 2005: 13). Gregory and Urry (1985: 21) explained that there is a long-established philosophical debate about the nature of space. In one corner is the absolute space position maintained by Descartes and Newton. In the other, is the view articulated by Leibnitz who argued that space is something merely relational. According to this relational view the universe simply consists of pieces of matter, composed of various substances, and these pieces of matter exhibit spatial relationships between each other and between their own constitutive parts (21).

Harvey (2006:124) elucidates, ‘An event or a thing at a point in space cannot be understood by appeal to what exists only at that point. It depends on everything else going on around it (much as all those who enter a room to discuss bring with them a vast array of experiential data accumulated from the world). A wide variety of disparate influences swirling over space in the past, present and future concentrate and congeal at a certain point (e.g. within a conference room) to define the nature of that point.’ Thus place, as a particular point in space, is mediated by these ‘disparate influences swirling over space.’

Again, he helpfully explains, ‘space is neither absolute, relative or relational in itself, but it can become one or all simultaneously depending on circumstances20. The problem of the proper conceptualisation of space is resolved through human practice with respect to it. In other words there are no philosophical answers to philosophical questions that arise over the nature of space – the answers lie in human practice. The question ‘what is space?’ is therefore replaced by the question “how is it that different human practices create and make use of distinctive conceptualizations of space?” (125/6).

To accept the idea of relational space you therefore have to go through a number of thought processes. Firstly, you have to accept the philosophical idea that space is composed of relations between objects. These objects can only be said to exist insofar as they contain and represent within themselves relationships to other objects. Similarly, in modern physics in order for space to arise there needs to be at least two fundamental particles.

Picture the famous image of the world at night with glistening illuminated light sources reflecting human existence. Then imagine that these places are made up of relations between these twinkling objects and you are approach the idea of relational space. But you have to go further than this idea to accept that space is constructed out of human relations. It is the journeys, phone calls, transmission of ideas over the radio, exchanges of opinions through social networking software that cement these relationships. These social relations are never still, they change from hour to hour, from minute to minute, the pattern of lights should not be thought of as static, relational space is always changing. Further, if space is made up of social relations, then, according to this view, society is also shaped by space. In other words ‘geography matters’.

These powerful ideas about relational space have opened up all sorts fields of study in Geography. Social relations are

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16 Socially speaking, space, like time, is a conjuncture, that is to say, the articulation of concrete historical practices (Castells, 1977)

17 There are many opportunities for studying pre capitalist views of space in an Asian context. See McGregor, 2008, 20-26, Rigg 2003, Part 1, Southeast Asian development: the conceptual language of dissent.

20 Lefebvre also referred to the intertwining of the three elements that made up space; Soja referred to the trialectics of spatiality where physical, mental and social space remain open to the re-combinations and simultaneities of the ‘real-and-imagined’ (1996, 65).
inherently unequal. There are always the powerful and the powerless. A relational view of space enables geographers to further explore these imbalances or ‘power geometries’ – an echo of the earlier discussion about people who feel ‘out of place’.

New spaces for study

Thus, geographers use space in a metaphorical sense, this time as a container for ideas rather than for chunks of Euclidian space, and, as such have developed these new ways of seeing our complex and differentiated world. For example, the authors of Living Geography look at futures, in terms of sustainable development, global dimensions; living in the wider world, applying geographical thinking to life, death and disease, as well as advocating the use of digital and spatial technologies to explore space.

Similarly, an ever more complex globalised world as envisaged by the authors of the Open University text, a World in the Making (Clarke et al, 2005) recognising that we often imagine and act ourselves as though the spaces are ready made (Lambert & Morgan, 2010, 78). But the world is not ready-made. It is constantly being made and remade by a variety of forces, both human and non-human, opening up possibilities of hybrid geographies of human and non-human forces. The view of space that is propounded here is relational space. Its four themes of the interconnections of the global economy through patterns of trade, work and finance; the proliferation of various political institutions and campaigns, the ways by which new technologies are increasingly networking the world; and, migration as a globalising process, are demonstrating that the world is always in the making as these relationships unfold.

Another text that points to a relational view of space is Consuming the Caribbean (Sheller, 2005) where spaces of the Caribbean has been fashioned out of flows of plants, people, ships, material resources, foodstuffs, technologies, know-how and capital occurring over centuries (Lambert & Morgan, 2010, 78). When Edward Said read Jane Austen’s novels he noted the relationship between the landed gentry in the novels and how they were deeply linked to the Caribbean as absentee owners of (slave) plantations (Crang, 1998, 170).

Said’s (1979) Orientalism can similarly be mined for examples of how relational space between the Occident and the Orient were constructed. One might also explore the relational space between Portugal and its Asian colonies in a similar way. When the Portuguese were establishing their vast trading empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth century in order to control the spice trade with India they not only needed to establish relations between sailors and merchants. There were artefacts that became important connecting objects in this network. Lisbon could only maintain its hold on this trading network by also including to the ‘regimento’, a means of navigating by the stars and by use of the ‘carriera’s ship specifically designed to carry cargo and to avoid plunder (Whatmore, 1997, Law, J. 1986)).

Further propositions about space

It is Massey who explores the concept of relational space best. In Spatial Divisions of Labour (1984) space was conceptualised as the product of the stretched out, intersecting and articulating social relations of the economy (2). This theme has been expanded by Massey’s subsequent work on relational space. Space, Place and Gender (1994) articulates these social relations stretching out across the globe and then back again to her home suburb of Kilburn. She observes a notice that announces a forthcoming concert at Wembley Arena featuring six or seven women with sub-continent and she remarks on an advertisement that explains that ‘all Hindus are cordially invited’. Massey adds, ‘It is (or ought to be) impossible even to begin thinking about Kilburn High Road without bringing into play half the world and a considerable amount of British imperialist history’ (154) She sees ‘economic, political and cultural social relations, each full of power and with internal structures of domination and subordination, stretched out over the planet at every different level, from the household to the local area to the international’ (154)

Massey’s recent book, For Space, (2005) makes three powerful and penetrating propositions about space:

1. That we recognise space as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny.

2. That we understand space as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality; as the sphere therefore of coexisting heterogeneity. Without space, no multiplicity; without multiplicity, no space.

3. That we recognise space is always under construction.

This last idea opens up all sorts of possibilities for space. Consider Canadian geographer, Geraldine Pratt (1999) writing about the ‘homespace’ of a Filipino maid. The young woman desperately attempts to establish a sense of belonging, a sense of personal space, in her tiny live-in room by adding photographs and religious icons. When she travels across Vancouver, she sees her journey space as relational. She recognises only the journey across town to collect family shopping, a tunnel vision of space, rather than the complexities of the city space itself.

Many of the more complex conceptions of space have been revealed through the scholarship of feminist geographers. Rose (1999, Longhurst, 2008) insists that space is not a pre-existent void or a ‘terrain to be filled or spanned or constructed’ but instead it is practised and performed. In short, Rose thinks of space as ‘a doing’; or, a space to be performed. In Phenomenology of Perception, Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes the relationship between the lived body and its world. He argues that the body is the original subject that constitutes space – that there would be no space without the body. He
goes on to suggest that through movement and orientation we create a link between our bodies and the outlying space, so that we organise our surrounding space as a continual extension of our own being.

**Subordinate concepts:** spaces shaped by social relations, social relations shaped by space – geography matters, power geometries, ready-made space, space in the making, hierarchies of power in space, scaled space, heterogeneous space, space under construction, bodily space, performative space.

**Conclusion**

Relational space frees Geography teachers to examine people and environment in a number of different ways. This space is a product of interrelations, multiplicity and spaces of openness (Murdock, 2006:20). According to Soja this new mode of understanding of relational space or, as he terms it, the spatiality of human life (Soja, 1999: 267) offers a different way of thinking about human geographies. Nevertheless, relational space is a slippery concept. As Crang and Thrift observe: “The problem is not so much that space means very different things – what concepts do not – but that it is used with such abandon that its meanings run into each other before they have properly been interrogated” (2000, 1) At the same time contemporary school geographies should be aware that ‘absolute space is the space that is broadly taken for granted’ (2000, 1) At the same time contemporary school geographies should be aware that ‘absolute space is the space that is broadly taken for granted’ (2000, 1). Just as we should heed Rawding’s advice with regard to an over simplistic conception of place ‘locations are seen as settings for the delivery of national curriculum themes … this undoubtedly simplifies and sterilises the study of place, often resulting in an arid narrative and uninspiring factual accumulation … with no coherent theoretical or philosophical underpinning’ (2007,22), so too we should contemplate Maudé’s counsel: ‘It is important to note that space, however conceptualised, has no explanatory power on its own. There are no spatial explanations of phenomena. In physical geography the explanations are through physical relationships and environmental processes. In human geography space only has an effect through the influence of relative location and distance to other places on the economic, social and cultural processes that influence the characteristics of places’ (2011, personal communication).

I would content that Geography is much, much more than the branch of science concerned with identifying and describing the Earth, utilising spatial awareness to try and understand why things exist in specific locations31. Let us continue to scratch our heads, theorise and change our minds about the concept of space and the spatial. Debates about space in contemporary human geography should have significant implications for Geography teachers and the Australian Curriculum, Geography.

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31 McInerney, 2011 defines space “Space is a concept relating to the study of an area of the earth at varying scales, from local to global. Within these spaces there are located places, people and geographical phenomena which the geographer may study. The studies may include plotting the location of natural and human places, description of the relationships, interactions, distributions and patterns between places and across the space, analyzing causation of locations and observed patterns and the identification of trends and projecting futures (modeling). Such literacy in relation to space is the language of spatial thinking”


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Focus: Violence against Women in the Pacific

Dr. Susan Bliss
National Curriculum: Year 10 Human Wellbeing; NSW Geography: Stage 5A4

‘Some 121 million children are not in school, most of them girls. If a family can afford school fees for only one child, it will likely be a boy who attends. If someone needs to fetch water or do housework instead of going to school, a girl will likely be chosen. If someone needs to stay home to care for younger siblings or sick or infirm household members, this will most likely be a girl: girls will also most likely be withdrawn from school early in adolescence as the age of marriage approaches.’ (UNICEF)

Did you know?

- in 2008 there were 96 girls for every 100 boys enrolled in primary school;
- the share of women employed outside of agriculture remains as low as 20% in Southern Asia, Western Asia and Northern Africa;
- the global share of women in parliament continues to rise slowly and reached 19% in 2010 – far short of gender parity;
- every year, 5,000 women are murdered by family members in the name of honour;
- one in three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in some way, most often by someone she knows;
- 130 million girls and young women have undergone female genital mutilation.

Photographs: Above, illiterate women working on the roads in Tibet and left, cleaning the streets in San Antonio Palopó, Guatemala (S. Bliss)
Gender Equality: Women’s Rights

- women and girls across income, class and culture are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse
- 4 million women and girls are bought and sold worldwide each year, either into marriage, prostitution or slavery; and
- Men suffer from gender inequalities – higher mortality and suicide rates, increasing social isolation, and problems related to alcohol, drugs and other substance abuse.

**Gender equality** means women and men have equal opportunities to realise their potential, to contribute to their country’s development and to benefit from their participation in society. Laws in Iran and Saudi Arabia treat women as legal country’s development and to benefit from their participation.

**Inheritance..These laws ignore international human rights. deny them equality in marriage, divorce, child custody and minors under the guardianship of male family members, and in society..Laws in Iran and Saudi Arabia treat women as legal**

**Target 3.A:**

Women all around the world are struggling because their gender automatically places them at a rank of lower importance. The United Nations is fighting to change this inequity by implementing the Millennium Development Goal 3.

Table: Human rights agreements

| Articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 | 2: rights and freedoms to all people – cannot be taken away because of your sex  
3: right to life, liberty and security  
7: right to be treated equally by the law  
17: right to own goods, land and other property  
21: right to take part in the government of your country and to have equal access to services in your country  
26. right to an education |
|---|---|
Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)  

Table: Millennium Development Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Women all around the world are struggling because their gender automatically places them at a rank of lower importance. The United Nations is fighting to change this inequity by implementing the Millennium Development Goal 3.

**Target 3.A:**

Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

- For girls in some regions, education remains elusive;
- poverty is a major barrier to education, especially among older girls;
- in every developing region except the CIS, men outnumber women in paid employment;
- women are largely relegated to more vulnerable forms of employment;
- women are over-represented in informal employment, with its lack of benefits and security;
- top-level jobs still go to men; and
- women are slowly rising to political power, but mainly when boosted by quotas and other special measures.

**Activity:**

Track the goal at [http://www.mdgmonitor.org/map.cfm?goal=2&indicator=0&cd=](http://www.mdgmonitor.org/map.cfm?goal=2&indicator=0&cd=)

**Table: Inquiry process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What has worked?</th>
<th>What is United Nations doing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing secondary school stipends for girls in Bangladesh. Money provided directly to girls and their families to cover tuition and other costs on the condition they enrol in secondary school and remain unmarried. As a result the number of girls in secondary schools increased from 33% in 1991 to 56% in 2005.</td>
<td>Working to reduce female genital mutilation and cutting by 40% between 2008 and 2012 in a number of countries including Burkina Faso, Egypt and Somalia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equity Seal provided to private firms in Mexico if they achieved specific standards related to gender equity, including recruitment, career advancement, training and reducing sexual harassment. By 2006, 117 companies had obtained the Seal. Similar initiatives have been launched in Brazil, Costa Rica and Egypt.</td>
<td>Training in political campaigning and governing in Cambodia resulted in an increase in the number of women running for office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting a gender quota for Parliament in Kyrgyzstan. There were no women in Parliament in 2005. By 2008 Kyrgyzstan had the highest proportion of women in Parliament (25.6%) and in Government (21%) in Central Asia.</td>
<td>Participation of women in the political process in Rwanda where women now make up 56% of the parliament – the world’s highest share.</td>
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Microfinance in Vietnam.

Teacher training and the development of materials that promote gender equality.

Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women – 304 programmes in 121 countries.

‘Advancing the rights of women and children advances humanity’

Two-thirds of the world’s 799 million illiterate adults ages 15 and over are women.

Many children in developing countries start life without adequate means of nutrition, learning, and protection. Women and girls are particularly challenged.

Some 67 countries have primary school attendance and enrolment rates for girls less than 85 per cent. Globally, there are just 96 girls for every 100 boys in primary school, with disparities at the secondary level even more acute. Yet uneducated girls are more at risk than boys to become marginalised. They are more vulnerable to exploitation. They are more likely than educated girls to contract HIV/AIDS, which spreads twice as quickly among uneducated girls than among girls that have even some schooling. Nearly a third of all adults living with HIV/AIDS are under the age of 25, and almost two thirds of these people are women.

As unschooled adults, these girls will be less likely to have a say socially and politically and to be able to support themselves. Women’s rights and access to land, credit and education are limited not only due to legal discrimination, but because more subtle barriers such as their work load, mobility and low bargaining position in the household and community prevent them from taking advantage of their legal rights. These problems affect their children: Women earn only one tenth of the world’s income and own less than one per cent of property, so households without a male head are at special risk of impoverishment. These women will also be less likely to immunize their children and know how to help them survive.

Gender bias undercut women’s rights in other areas. Practices such as early marriage or poor health services result in high rates of maternal mortality. Some 529,000 women died giving birth last year, 99 per cent of them in developing countries. For each birth-related death, 30 other women were injured or disabled. Having a missing or disabled mother severely undercuts a child’s chances of survival and health as well.

The world has recognized the importance of gender equality. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history, sets forth provisions that include civil rights and freedoms, family environment, basic health and welfare, education, leisure and cultural activities and special protection measures for all children.

http://www.unicef.org/mdg/gender.html
Equal rights: responses

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and acceded to by 180 States, sets down rights for women, of freedom from discrimination and equality under the law. Realising the rights and equality of women is also the key to the survival and development of children and to building healthy families, communities and nations.

The Australian government’s 1984 Sex Discrimination Act promotes gender equality and eliminates discrimination on the basis of sex. The Act is supported by Australia’s Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC). At the international level the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and International Women’s Day foster women’s empowerment and gender equality.

Future strategies

Despite improvements in the status of women seventy percent of the poorest people are female. The 2015 United Nations Millennium Development Goals aims to reduce female poverty (Goal 1), provide universal primary education (Goal 2), promote gender equality and empower women (Goal 3) and improve maternal health (Goal 5). AusAID and Women in Development (WID) responded to the challenge and integrated gender equality in development programs.

Article: AusAID’s response to promoting gender equality

Despite advancements in women’s rights in Australia, such as the right to vote (1902), women still experience inequality in employment, leadership and political representation. The 2008 Australian Plan of Action towards Gender Equality aims to:
- increase the number of women in leadership positions;
- balance work and family;
- reduce the incidence of sexual harassment and the gender gap in retirement savings;
- strengthen the 1984 Sex Discrimination Act; and
- progress in health and education

In 2008 the global gender gap ranked Australia 21 out of 130 countries after reducing the gap in health and education. Australia aims to improve political empowerment and economic participation of women as 25% of women and 21% of men stated that women are not treated equally in the Australian workplace.

Table: Global Gender Gap 2008 – international comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Rank (130 countries)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bar graph: Australian attitudes towards equality in the workforce

Source: Centre/EOWA_Publications/Generation_F/Graphs/graph8.jpg

Framework for Action

Framework for Action is an integrated approach to equality of human rights. It operates at all levels – family, community, business and government. The aim is to increase women's:

- access to justice;
- access to support services such as councillors and safe places;
- education and status in society; and
- participation in public life: In Fiji 11% of parliamentarians are women; Solomon Islands and Vanuatu had periods with no female member of parliament; and in PNG only four women elected to its 109 member Parliament in 33 years since Independence. Only Fiji has a solid tradition of civil society activism, now threatened with the country's four coups in the last 20 years.

Protecting the vulnerable

The UN Millennium Declaration stressed protection of vulnerable women and children as ‘tens of millions of children across the globe are victims of exploitation, abuse and violence each year. They are abducted from their homes and schools and recruited into armed conflicts, exploited sexually, or trafficked and forced to work in abominable conditions. Girls in particular are vulnerable, particularly when not in school. They also suffer from abuses that may have their society’s mandate, but severely curtail their rights: they are victims of violence in the home, they aren’t allowed to attend school, or are forced into early marriage, or to undergo genital mutilation.’ (UNICEF)

Violence Against Women (VAW)

Violence Against Women is both a cause and consequence of discrimination against women. A life free from violence is a basic human right, yet women were raped in armed conflict in Rwanda, burnt for their dowry in India and six year olds forced to marry in Ethiopia.

‘Violence against women persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation of human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality…. (A) s long as violation against women continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress toward equality, development and peace.’ Kofi Annan

Violence Against Women, including physical, psychological, economic and sexual, is a serious global problem as:

- it affects all countries – including Australia;
- both men and women are perpetrators of violence;
- it is complex as forces are shaped at individual, community and social/cultural levels;
- 1 in 3 women have been beaten, raped or abused; and
- in South Africa, one women murdered by an intimate partner every 6 hours

The costs of VAW have impacted on families, communities and countries, such as:

- increase in health care and social services costs as well as policing and justice system costs;
- World Bank states gender based violence has caused loss of wages - 2% of GDP in Chile and 1.6% in Nicaragua;
- linked to ill health, homicide, suicide and HIV/AIDS; and
- Australia’s National Council to Reduce VAW and their Children states that if action is not taken now, VAW will cost the Australian economy $15.6 billion by 2021–22.

Pacific case studies

Photograph: AusAID program in Pacific Islands

Violence Against Women is severe and pervasive in Melanesia (Fiji, Papua, PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu) and Timor Leste
a) Timor Leste:
- 1 in 5 married women afraid of partner
- 1 in 10 beaten while pregnant
- during crises 27% of women reported physical violence from outsiders (militia and military)
b) Fiji:
- 66% physically abused by partner
- one third hit for refusing sex
- 13% raped (30% between 11 and 15 years and 31% by family members)
c) Quotes:
- ‘Wife beating happens every day, but only the brave ones come to us’ (police officer PNG)
- ‘The husbands of working women like to give them black eyes, so everyone knows he is still the boss’ (PNG)
- ‘Boys beat up girls who want them to use condoms’ (Solomon Islands)
- ‘If a girl stays late at school, she walks home alone, and can then be raped’ (Vanuatu)
- ‘Men steal girls, keep them and rape them for weeks’ (PNG)
- ‘Girls can get raped by teachers in primary and secondary school (PNG) - helping with their work and grades’
- ‘Women and girls are trafficked – prostitution’ (Timor Leste)
- ‘Loggers build homes in return for money and their 14-15 year old daughter’ (Solomon Islands)
- ‘Pack rape is common’ (PNG)
- ‘Women with a disability are more subject to abuse and rape’ (all countries)
d) Complex cultural issues:
- Bride Price: Women viewed a property – ‘I bought her for $5,000. I can do anything with her. She’s my property’ (Fiji)
- Traditional ideas and culture: Women’s role, ‘encouraging forgiveness and to be a better wife.’ ‘men use culture as an excuse’
- Rural: ‘Difficult to police in rural areas, low literacy/education – no information of their rights’
- Prison: ‘If I report my husband for what he did, I won’t get any money while he is in prison’ (Solomon Islands)
- Living with in-laws: ‘Women generally live with their husband’s family with little support. If they return or escape back home they may be refused, especially when there is pressure on land and resources’
- Faith: ‘Gospel approach to domestic violence is forgive and forget – the message most women receive from their churches’ (PNG)
- Compensations: ‘If a suspect is being violent and can afford to pay compensation, then by accepting the compensation, the violence is allowed to continue’ (Timor Leste)

• • • • • •

e) Natural disasters
Pacific region suffers frequent natural disasters - earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, floods, mudslides, droughts, frosts and tsunamis. Disasters displace populations and increase women’s dependence on men. They also increase women’s vulnerability to physical and sexual violence, both from displaced males and from rescue workers. ‘There was lots of violence and beating of women due to loss of property during the tsunami and men taking out their frustrations on women.’ (Save the Children)

Photograph: An old ibu (woman) sits among the ruins of her house in Pariaman, north of Padang, West Sumatra after the tsunami.

Source: Andy Campbell/SurfAid International. photolibrary@ausaid.gov.au

f) Conflicts
- ‘Some married women raped during conflicts were forced to pay compensation to their husband’s families because of the shame and blame’ (Solomon Islands)
- The effects of the nine year civil war which ended in 1999 continues – armed men and boys for years used guns to intimidate women…they have become habituated to violence – women the target (PNG – Bougainville)

g) Links to HIV/AIDS
Sexual and physical violence against women contribute to the spread of HIV. Fear of partners’ violent reactions makes women less willing to discuss using condoms or question their partner about their other sexual activities.
Women with abusive husbands are afraid to admit they were raped, be tested for STIs or HIV, disclose a positive diagnosis, and access treatment.

Photograph: Billboard in Nauru by Lorrie Graham.

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/ausaid_photo/library/3403752596/lightbox/

h) Problems

- all countries have national umbrella organisations for women but they tend to be conservative and driven by internal dissensions
- ‘gender equality has to be nurtured because it causes sensitivities. Merely talking about gender equality is a direct challenge to male dominance’ (Ministry for Women, Youth and Children, Solomon Islands)
- shared understanding between men and women is essential to effect permanent change otherwise it risks being counter-productive
- some counselling programs for abused women have encouraged them to be more obedient to their husband
- some faith-based organisations promote authority of the husband
- some training materials on rape place blame on victim’s dress or behaviour
- there are vigilante groups promoting barbaric treatment of alleged offenders
- lack of evidence
- lack of resources and support as well as unequal access to services (rural/urban; rich/poor)
- enormous gap between public discourse and reality

Quotes:

‘If people hear a woman has been raped, they talk about her as if she was wrong or dirty’

‘She will hide it as long as she can’ (pregnancy…) ‘I couldn’t tell my friends. I was ashamed’

i) Violence against women (VAW): responses

In 2008 the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon launched a campaign to end violence against women by 2015. He said ‘at least one out of every three women is likely to be beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime’ Violence against women exists in all countries and across all levels of education, income, race and culture. Far too often, the crimes go unpunished, the perpetrators walk free and few women seek justice because of fear or lack of money.

In 2008, 39.9% of Australian women experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence. The non-government organisation Amnesty International responded with its Stop Violence against Women campaign and its National Plan of Action that works with 100 organisations to end violence against Indigenous, disabled and lesbian women. Also the White Ribbon Foundation of Australia aims to eliminate violence against women by promoting culture-change

j) AusAID: Responding to VAW in Melanesia and East Timor

Stop Violence: Responding to violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor sets out Australia’s priorities and actions to prevent and reduce violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor. It outlines the Australian Government’s support to increase women’s access to justice and access to support services, prevent violence against women, and ensure an integrated approach.

Violence against women and the fear of violence are significant human rights violations. The Australian Government recognises that reducing violence against women is crucial to achieving equality between men and women and delivering good development outcomes.

The impact of violence against women on developed and developing economies is devastating. New research commissioned by Australia’s National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children found that if appropriate action is not taken now, violence against women will cost the Australian economy $15.6 billion by 2021–22.

While the ODE report and this response focus on the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault, AusAID recognises the spectrum of violence that women face and is committed to addressing all forms of gender-based violence through our development assistance program.


AusAID: Putting commitments into practice

In June, Australia joined key United Nations agencies to launch an inventory of best practice in preventing sexual violence in conflict.

The inventory, Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence—An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice, provides detailed examples of peacekeeping tactics that have helped to reduce sexual violence and improve the safety of women in conflict. For example, in Konya, thorny bushes were planted around camp perimeters to deter night attackers and sexual predators. This helped to protect the camp without having to resort to barbed wire.

The inventory will help establish a more systematic approach to preventing sexual violence in conflict.

The inventory was funded by the Australian Government, and is the result of collaboration between the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Fund for Women as part of the Inter-agency network, UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict.

United Nations agencies will use the inventory to help train peacekeepers.


Gender Equality: Women’s Rights
Conclusion

‘My UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, and the Network of Men Leaders I launched last year, have generated welcome momentum and engagement. The world is spreading: violence against women and girls has no place in any society, and impunity for perpetrators must no longer be tolerated. On this International Day, I urge all – Governments, civil society, the corporate sector, individuals – to take responsibility for eradicating violence against women and girls.’

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Message for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 25 November 2010

‘We live in one world. What we do affects others, and what others do affects us, as never before. To recognise that we are all members of a world community and that we all have responsibilities to each other is not romantic rhetoric, but modern economic and social reality.’

Department for Education and Skills, UK (2004)

Activities

Understanding

• Identify the human rights agreements related to women
• Explain why violence against women is an abuse of their human rights
• Describe how individuals, groups and governments responded to abuse of women’s rights
• Suggest strategies Australia can adopt to improve the rights of women
• Imagine you were the goodwill ambassador for UNIFEM suggest strategies you would adopt to promote gender equality and empower women
• What region in the world had the highest gender equality ranking? What was the rank of developing countries such as the Philippines, Lesotho and Sri Lanka? Suggest strategies to improve Australia’s global ranking

Thinking and Applying

• Compare men and women’s attitudes to gender equality in the workforce. Imagine you were the head of an organisation. Describe strategies you could implement to improve equality in the workplace.

• Select five countries including Australia, a small Pacific nation and a country in South East Asia. Locate statistics on women and men for these selected countries.


• Create a table contrasting the numbers of women and men:
  * Population – women/100 men
  * Families – total fertility rate
  * Health – life expectancy
Gender Equality: Women’s Rights

* Education - primary and secondary enrolment rate; illiteracy rate
* Work - distribution of labour force by status in employment
* Political decision making – number of parliamentary seats held by women

- Research the global gender gap rank for the five countries
- Write a generalisation on equality of men and women in each of these countries based on these statistics
- Discuss the barriers women face in achieving equality (e.g. culture, poverty)
- Script a radio report on projects that benefit women’s rights.
- Create a series of questions and answers about the need for, and ways of, overcoming gender inequality.
- Research how countries are progressing or not progressing toward gender equity by 2015 Millennium Development Goals http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx. Describe the strategies used to address gender inequality in Australia and other nations
- Discuss how Australian government (e.g. AusAID) programs have addressed the rights of women
- Violence against women impoverishes individuals, families and communities, reducing the economic development of each nation. Discuss
- Explain UNIFEM’s campaign against violence to women. What are the strategies used by UNIFEM to highlight the issue? http://www.unifem.org/campaigns/vaw/

ICT


Discuss how Australian aid contributes to gender equality in developing countries http://www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid/gender.cfm

Discuss how groups such as the International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA) aims to improve the rights of women http://www.iwda.org.au/au/

Discuss how individuals can make a difference by improving gender equality – Women on the frontline series http://www.unifem.org/resources/item_detail.php?ProductID=111


Explain the roadmap towards gender equality http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2008/76_08.html


Discuss how modern technology, such as the Internet, is used to support a better future for women http://endviolence.un.org

In 2007 the hour-long documentary, NOW Senior Correspondent Maria Hinojosa takes viewers to Guatemala, India and Niger to explore stories of early marriage, including an illegal midnight wedding in India where children as young as three years are married, and the courageous efforts of people campaigning to end child marriage in many of these communities. http://www.icrw.org/html/news/news.htm


Photograph: I am powerful

Source: http://www.therealstevegray.com/2011/02/watch-i-am-powerful/
The Australian Curriculum: Geography identifies place as one of the pivotal concepts. How place is understood by teachers and how places are constructed and represented by teachers (Lambert & Morgan, 2010, 83) is of fundamental importance. For some teachers, in the consultation phase of the curriculum process, place was simply envisaged as location (personal observation). For others, the aim of school Geography is to make learners ‘more effective perceivers, users, appreciators, evaluators and developers of place’ (Catling, 1987, 19). A fascination with place has encouraged many of us to become immersed in Geography in school, university (Creswell, 2008, 132) and long teaching careers.

The Draft F–12 Australian Curriculum: Geography concisely defines place as ‘a specific part of the earth’s surface that has been named and given meanings by people, although these meanings may differ’ (2011, 7) and then proceeds to demonstrate how students progressively develop an understanding of place. The intent here is to build on these ideas through discussion of a wide range of thinking about place with most examples chosen from Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

Place is a rich geographical concept that fires the geographical imagination. Place is teased out here by: examining theory, or ‘grand narratives’, as well as stories that people tell about place; the experience of place which emphasises the connection between ‘being in the world’ and the sense of place associated with living in specific places (Agniewski, Livingstone & Rogers, 1996 370); and place as a locus of identity because people invest their surroundings with meaning and can develop a sense of place (367).

Place, according to Hayden (1997, 112, cited in Anderson, 2010, 37) ‘is one of the trickiest words in the English language, a suitcase so overfilled that one can never shut the lid’. Feminist writers use the term place to signify positionality or social location frequently expressed in terms of gender, race, class, age or sexuality (Anderson & Jones, 2009, 292). These metaphorical vocabularies of place have some salience in a number of geographical considerations of place, but place is all too often a more concrete concept for geographers, albeit often framed in poetic language.

Pascoe speaks of geographical place, ‘If you are born here you might admire another place but never love in like your own. Love is when you stand before your country and your...”

1 Put in its simplest form ‘geography should deal with the world as it is actually lived by real people’ (Peet, 1998, 60); ‘being in the world’ is most often associated with Heidegger’s philosophy.
jaw drops open and your soul creeps out of your mouth and walks about the country and when it returns it whispers in your ear, pardon me but I have just visited our mother. She is the plain below Nourlangie Rock, she is the serenity of Blanket Bay, the all-knowing stillness of the Wallagarrah River, she is the birth mark stain of vermillion you see as you cross the continental centre of this country, our birth place  

The task of the geographer/Geography teacher teaching about places can fall into the trap of presenting endless lists of facts about places, the ways in which geographers in classical antiquity compiled inventories to describe parts of the Earth. One solution to this is to produce evocative descriptions that facilitate an understanding and appreciation of places (Hart, 1982). Then there are the more analytical approaches to explaining why places are like they are in which geographers compare places that are similar in all but a few key variables, and evaluate the effects of these variables. Diamond (2005, 329-357) examines the two different places that occupy the Caribbean Island of Hispaniola in his study on 'One Island, Two Peoples, Two Histories: The Dominican Republic and Haiti' and Hutchinson (2010, 11) follows up on Diamond’s ideas in an examination of the physical, human and historical geographies of the Dominican Republic and Haiti in the context of the 2010 Port-au-Prince earthquake. A social scientist writing from a sociological perspective (Sassen, 2011, 8) examines a highly variable mosaic of results in the places she identifies as global cities: urban economist, Glaeser (2011, 41-64) writes of the rise and decline of rustbelt cities in the USA; and, Parkins and Craig (2006), from the humanities, explain the differences between the various Città Slow4 or Slow Cities throughout Europe.

Another approach to the study of places is through fieldwork; another through the use of literature, film, digital imagery, fine art, music and poetry. But teaching about place may need other sets of skills. Rawling (2011, 65) maintains that school Geography, as it is currently taught tends 'to undervalue the poetic, the emotional and the spiritual dimensions of “being in place”'. Furthermore, when examining Pascoe’s construction of place there may be a need to consider the textual strategies of contemporary writing; when examining a contemporary novel or digital image is it desirable to take into account changes in perspective, jump-cuts and cross cuts between scene, and different constructions of time and space (Gregory, 1989, 229)? At the very least the list of strategies1 that Rawling (2011, 74) enumerates should develop the geographical imagination with regard to place.

Defining Place

Pascoe’s evocative extract is only one clue to a number of constructs of place. Aristotle, in his Physics pondered about place to then conclude that it refers to the precise dimensions of the space that contains something—'place' is a neutral container (McKeon 1941, cited in Relph, 2001, 11448). Philosopher Casey asserts, 'To live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the place one is in'(1996, 18, cited in Massey, 2004, 7). Casey (2001) speaks of a remarkable convergence between philosophy and geography in recent years, particularly between phenomenology, a form of philosophy that attempts to give a direct description of first-person experience, and, humanistic geography. He explains that, ‘Both geography and phenomenology have come to focus on place as experienced by human beings, in contrast to space, whose abstractness discourages experiential explorations’ (Casey, 2001, 683). Thus for Cresswell (1996, cited in Relph, 2001, 11448) place is ‘a meaningful segment of space’ and ‘a container of social power’. Similarly, Cresswell explains that places are locations with meaning seen as particular constellations of material things that occupy a particular segment of space and have sets of meanings attached to them (2008, 135).

On the other hand, to geographers who espouse spatial science, places were relegated to ‘nodes in networks of rationally determined flows of people, commodities and money’ (Lambert & Morgan, 2010, 86). One could argue that such a view of place still is prevalent among geographers using GIS with their preoccupation with ‘relationships between events and objects in space by correlating their spatial co-occurrence’ (Agnew, 2011, 321).

Major (2010, 90) explained that Marxist, phenomenological, feminist and post-structural approaches4 have all involved, in their widely divergent ways, some recognition of the variability, uniqueness and multiplicity of place. Explanations of these theoretical positions is not the aim here. An examination of place from within the discipline of Geography has as much to contribute to ‘theory’ as it has to learn from it (Gregory, 1994).

Regional geographer Paasi (1996, cited in Macleod, 2001, 678) has claimed that the concept of place is useful in depicting the context through which the paths and projects of the everyday lives of individuals are enacted. Similarly, contributions from critical human geographers capture an internal essence of place in their arguments that a place is where [people] have networks of friends, relatives and

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1 Goolwa, in South Australia, Katoomba in NSW and Yea, in Victoria are currently Cittaslow places in Australia.

2 The strategies include reading novels, poetry, travel writing and nature writing; expressing personal responses to place creatively; drawing of personal geographies; using ways of ‘being in the world’ as starting points e.g. surfing, painting; allowing for creativity and a sense of wonder when reflecting on fieldwork; using literary and textual artefacts as tools of stimulus; and, undertaking cross disciplinary approaches to place. (2011, 74).

4 Marxist views, for example, would see dystopian place fashioned out of the ebbs and flows of global capital, phenomenologists focus on places formed from the full range of human experience, feminists on ‘gendered places’ and post-structuralist geographers are concerned about ‘relationality’ where place is made by interactions of internalising forces, powers, influences, and meaning from elsewhere.

Agnew, (2011, 324) identifies a similar set of four recent theoretical approaches that investigate the nature of place: neo-Marxist, the humanist or agency-based (including phenomenological), the feminist, and the performative (a particular line of post-structuralist thought).
acquaintances, where they have learned about life and acquired a cultural frame of reference through which to interpret the social world around them (Beynon and Hudson, 1993, 82). But there are also exogenous factors that affect place, places are interlinked with other places and these connections construct place across space and over time. Place is also clearly different from space. ‘Spaces are scientific, open and detached, whilst places are intimate, peopled, and emotive. Place then is the counterpoint of space: places are politicised and cultured; they are humanised versions of space’ (Anderson & Jones, 2009, 293).

Lambert sums up various notions of place rather well for Geography teachers, ‘Every place has a particular location and a unique set of physical and human characteristics. Furthermore, the same place can be represented differently. Places are dynamic and subject to constant change. What we think about places is both shaped by, and shapes, our geographical imagination’. (Lambert, 2009, 1)

My Place

According to Agnew (1987, 2011) place as a ‘meaningful location’ involved three attributes: location, a point on the Earth’s surface; locale, a setting and scale for people’s daily actions and interactions; and, a sense of place, subjective feelings about place.

Ashfield, an inner western Sydney suburb is located 33°53’20’S, 151°07’30”E, approximately 9 kilometres southwest of the CBD. Its locale includes a multicultural mixture of residents with some 20% speaking a Chinese language at home, in an urban milieu made up of post-World War II low rise home units, Federation era detached houses and a number of splendid Victorian villas. Ashfield is a porous place; an unbounded lived space. An Anglo-Celtic pre-war population has been enriched by migration streams from Poland, Italy and Greece and more latterly India and China. Ashfield high street, popularly known as ‘Little Shanghai’ is home to Chinese small businesses where about eighty-five per cent of the shops display Chinese script shop signage (Wise, 2009, 93). The sense of place engendered in Ashfield for many Chinese Australians is a powerful one where local Shanghai dialects can be heard and where familiar foods evoke a deeply embodied, sensuous feeling of belonging and familiarity, which in this case knits together both Ashfield and Shanghai (Wise, 2009, 99), thus enveloping people into a strong sense of translocal identity. Here local-local connections, complicated spatial lattices and powerful place-based identities combine to fashion, a home away from home, a sense of place dependent on both mobility

and the importance of place. However, these modes of translocal belonging among the Chinese residents have also constituted a sense of alienation among many elderly Anglo-Celtic residents (Smith, 2009, 195). Ashfield will continue to be enriched by translocality as evidenced in the colourful costumes of the Tongan and Fijian communities that attend the local church, the Polish Club with its enormous portrait of Kosciusko in the dining room, and the had written signage in Russian at the Shanghai Night restaurant that attracts the Russian immigrants who lived in exile in Shanghai in the early 20thc (Wise, 2009, 98).

Part of Wise’s fieldwork into ‘multicultural place sharing’ involved videotaping everyday life along Liverpool Road focusing on the rhythms of the street, who uses it, and how people from different backgrounds interact with it as a place’ (Wise, 2009, 97).

5 There is some confusion between the use of ‘lived space’ as it is referred to in contemporary French philosophy and the geographical connotation of place. Several geographers maintain that such usage should be termed, or conceived of, as referring to place (Agnew, 2011, Creswell 2004, and Mitchell, 2000).

6 Urry (2000, 132-133, cited in Oakes & Price, 2008, 308) believes that ‘People dwell in and through being at home and away, through the dialectic of roots and routes or what Clifford terms dwelling in travel’.

34 Geography Bulletin Vol 44, No 1 2012
My Place and some theoretical issues

A number of theoretical issues regarding place are informed by the Ashfield study. The reference to the ‘rhythms of the street’ reminds one of the tendencies of some contemporary geographers to study performance in place and space. Seamon (1980) writes in a humanistic or phenomenological vein of a ‘body ballet’ – think of the automatic driving responses of car drivers on a regular route to work and aggregate these into habitual routines that are enacted throughout the day and you have a time–space routine where people negotiate a place in the rush hour or navigate busy streets coalescing to form a ‘place ballet’.’ Seamon’s argument is that places exhibit a kind of un-choreographed yet ordered practice that makes the place just as much as the place’s more static and bounded qualities do. Indeed the meaning of a place may arise out of the constant reiteration of practices that are simultaneously individual and social. Places in this sense are intensely embodied and dramatic’ (Cresswell, 2009, 175).

The strong leitmotif of mobility signals a change in the ways in which many geographers theorise place. The founders of place studies, such as Ratzel (1844-1904) believed that ‘fixity in place was a necessary condition of advanced culture and civilisation’ (Oakes & Price, 2008, 325) ‘like a tree, then, civilisation was ‘rooted’ in the soil’ (84). Harvey wrote of the difference between place as a secure and bounded community as opposed to the ‘uncontrollable vectors of spatiality’ (Cresswell, 2004, 56). Yet a metaphor that helps to explain contemporary ideas about place again use a biotic figure of speech, but this time the root is a rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983). Tree logic explains place in terms of region where geography is ‘the study of places’ (Hartshorne, 1961), with place as an apparently unproblematic concept and region is the essential mental construct for the organization of geographic data (1961). Tree-like logic sees central places set in latticed hexagons spread across an isotropic plane; it also sees place as Yi-Fu Tuan’s does as an emotional bounded area, often the dwelling-place, to which an individual or a group has a strong emotional relationship. People then even derive their personal identity from it; they are for example a Novocastrian (Dunn, McGuirk & Winchester, 1995) rather than a town planner or a surfer.

The rhizome frees up theoretical presuppositions about dwelling in place, we can dwell by being both home and away and by moving between places and within places (Oakes & Price, 2008, 308). The rhizome differs from the tree or root in that it is not necessary to return to its origins, in fact, it brings into question the concept of origin; the rhizome is likely to rupture at any point into ‘lines of flight’ and cannot be contained within a simple abstract structure (Cranny-Francis, 2006, 154). Post-structuralist geography sees places not as closed and contained but engaged with other spaces and places; some processes and practices emanate from within, some from without; both the performer and the site of performance are entangled as places are made and remade (Murdoch, 2006, 18). In phenomenological terms our dwelling or being in the world involves embodied processes of place-making and meaning-making as conjoined activities (Oakes & Price, 254). Mobility7 is taken up in the notion of the ‘nomad’ as a way of questioning the norm of dwelling in place, of a ‘sedentary metaphysics’ (Cresswell, 2009, Malkki, 1992) (and of a way of providing sites of resistance to other grand narratives such as colonialism, patriarchy or nation building). Massey (2005, 82) goes further to argue that the rhetoric used in globalisation discourse comes to have almost ‘the ineluctability of a grand narrative’.

Interconnections

Epeli Hau’ofa, a Tongan academic, reflects on his oceanic place and ocean peoples, ‘Their was a large world in which peoples and cultures moved and mingled unhindered by boundaries of the kind erected much later by imperial powers. From one island to another they sailed to trade and to marry; thereby expanding social networks for greater flow of wealth. They travelled to visit relatives in a wide variety of natural and cultural surroundings, to quench their thirst for adventure, and to even fight and dominate … Nineteenth century imperialism erected boundaries that led to the contraction of Oceania, transforming a once boundless world into the Pacific Island states and territories that we know today. People were confined to their tiny spaces, isolated from each other’ (Hau’ofa, 1992, 152-155).

Cresswell (2004) recounts the narrative of travel writer Raban and his retelling of the 1792 voyage of HMS Discovery, under the command of Captain Vancouver. In mapping the coastline between present-day Seattle and Vancouver the explorer named prominent parts of the coast rendering it a place of empire. His journal recorded the seemingly inexplicable and nonsensical movements of the natives in their canoes as they zigzagged across the ocean, ‘To the native canoeists their movement made perfect sense as they read the sea as a set of places associated with particular spirits and particular journeys. While the colonists looked at the sea and saw blank space, the natives saw place’ (Cresswell, 2004, 9). On both sides of the Pacific place is made up of wind, waves, clouds, stars, sun, moon, birds, fish and the water itself (Davis, 2009, 52).

Gale (1987, 128-131) describes Diyari country to the east of Lake Eyre as being an open place, an important trading Australia-wide Aboriginal trading hub. Kooperamanna, literally ‘as the fingers all come together in the root’ of the hand, so do the native tribes come together’ (128), in pre-

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7 Rose (1999), in quite difficult philosophical language, partially drawn from psychoanalysis, insists that space is not a pre-existent void or a ‘terrain to be filled or spanned or constructed’ but instead practised and performed. In short, Rose thinks of space as a ‘doing’; or, a space to be performed. Thrift (1999), in another challenging reading, puts forward theories of ‘performativity’ in relation to place.

8 Agnew (2011, 322) admonishes British geographers that ‘ransack’ a quotation or two from French philosophers just to find a seemingly apposite quotation but I think the inclusion is instructive here.
Invasion times marked the intersection of five major trading routes from as far away as Cape York, central Queensland, the Kimberleys and Coorong bringing in boomerangs, axe heads, sea shells, animal skins and wooden artefacts to a place that was located near the ‘proper’ ochre and best quality pituri (native tobacco).

Kimble (1951, 499) maintained that rather than the seeing a patchwork of regions, ‘from the air it is the links in the landscapes, the rivers, roads, railways, canals, pipe-lines, electric cables, rather than the breaks that impress the aviator’. Massey (1995) believes that there are strong arguments for including the interconnections of places into conceptualisation of place. The examples above demonstrate that places have long been open and porous. Further, interconnections between places across scale and space become ever more evident in a globalised world. Thirdly, contemporary theory emphasises that any concept of identity, whether it be a person or place, should be an open one rather than bounded or closed off from the outside (1995, 67).

A relational geography of place attempts to rethink place in terms of the wider social relations that constitute it. This relational view sees both space and place as made up of spatialised social relations that not only make and remake place but also reshape social and cultural identities and how they are represented (Allen, Massey & Cochrane, 1998, 1-2). Further, there are multiple ways of seeing place; they are not out there waiting to be discovered, they are subjective and collective social constructs. If place is conceptualised in this way they are thus not isolated from each other, each with their own personality. Their very characteristics are formed, in part, through their links with one another (Massey, 1995, 69). The economic prospects and general well-being of place dwellers can in no way be completely determined by events or actions within the places themselves (69).

Because, as Massey argues places are actually constituted out of wider relations and networks and should be seen as meeting points where different social groups and relations come together, there is an emphasis on diversity, hybridity and heterogeneity within places. This engenders a distinctive ‘politics of place’ as different social groups and actors assert their claims to place, striving to shape its meaning and character according to their interests and orientations (MacKinnon, 2009). Engagement with the porosity rather than the boundedness of place is an important conceptual understanding that allows young people explore different responses to immigration (Taylor, 2005, 16), for example.

Additionally, places compete with each in terms of power, their material future, ‘whether a new development should occur, whether new people should be allowed to move in, whether a place should remain “unspoilt”’ (Massey & Jess, 1995, 2). This idea of place as a ‘meeting place’ is a powerful one because chains of command and control are stretched out across the surface of the planet and over time they are contingent on the processes that create, sustain and dissolve them (Harvey, 1996, 261). — places are thus sites of relational conflict and where consensual relations can be resolved. These relations exist over differing scales from what Massey refers to as ‘the unimaginably cosmic to the intimately tiny’ (1998, 37). Again, social space consists of all the networks and complexities of social interaction and interconnection, whether they be very small scale or global in their reach (Massey & Jess, 1995, 54).

**Representing place**

David Harvey bundles together an eclect group of terms that he maintains are associated with place, ‘we use many generic terms such as place, region, area, territory, and locality, to identify a distinctive and usually bounded space as if it is a relatively permanent and separate entity endowed with particular and distinctive qualities. A series of cognate descriptive terms, such as city, village, hamlet, fiefdom, administrative district, neighbourhood, and even community and home and hearth, as well as more technical-sounding determinations, such as ecosystem, microclimate, topographic region or landscape, effectively some distinctive and coherent assemblage of particular phenomena in a bounded space’ (2008, 169-70).

**Place as landscape**

It is landscape that is most often associated with ways of seeing in Geography. Relph (1976, 30) maintains that the spirit of a place resides in its landscape and Cresswell (2004, 10) explains that landscape combines a focus on the material topography of a place with the notion of vision, or the way that it is seen; and yet humans are an integral part of place: we inhabit place but we look at landscape.

Malouf, thought of the Australian landscape in a similar way the American cultural geographers of the Berkeley School, although he did open up another way of making place. ‘The land had received the imprint of culture long before we came to it. It had been shaped by use and humanised by knowledge that was both practical and sacred. It had also been taken deep into the consciousness of its users so that, through naming and storytelling and myth-making, all the features of the land took on a second life in the imagination and in the mouths of women and men. A land can bear any number of cultures laid one above the other or set side by side. It can be inscribed and written upon many times. One of those forms of writing is the shaping of a landscape. In any place where humans have made their homes, the landscape will be a made one. Landscape-making is in our bones’ (1998).

Other ways that geographers look at landscape are useful heuristics for representing place. Cosgrove emphasises the ocular and the cartographic in his way of seeing, imagining and representing the world (2008) but cultural geographers

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10 An approach variously called ‘landscape morphology’ or ‘cultural history’ that involved the inductive gathering of facts about the human impact on the landscape over time.
are also concerned with visual and textual practices and the ways in which landscapes, or places, whether the representation is ‘in paint on canvas, in writing on paper, in earth, stone, water and vegetation on the ground’ (Cosgrove & Daniels, 1988, 1). The metaphor of the landscape as ‘text’ with investigations into post-war linguistics and semiotics thus disclose multiple layers of meaning and ‘thick descriptions’ (Cosgrove & Jackson, 1987). The investigations by Wise, video-recording the ‘rhythms of the street’ in Ashfield, the dissection of movies such as Heimat (homeland) (Morley & Robins, 1995) and Bladerunner (Harvey, 1990) or visual methodologies more generally opens up other visual and textual practices about place.

Seeing place in Australia

A number of different examples illustrate diverse approaches to represent place. Firstly, written texts can be mined for meaning. Main was attempting to find his Australian place in Wiradjuri Country, in south-western NSW. ‘Standing on the hillside beside the graves, I heard trucks rumbling into Tarcutta on their long journeys between cities. I knelt on the damp red earth to draw in the dreamy aroma of a chocolate lily blossom. Ants crawled over the rotting leaves. One deep breath, then another, as the flowering lily drew me into relationships with particularities and histories, into dialogue with place’ (Main, 2005, 15).

Geographer, Heathcote described the development of the built environment, in 1914, in rural Australia, ‘From the golden fleece and the golden grain, the profits had accumulated, bark huts became brick and stone homesteads, dirt tracks became highways and rail routes, and the river steamers crunched their way over the snags and sandbars of the Murray Darling with supplies and produce’ (Heathcote, 1994, 262).

White wanted ‘to paint a portrait of my city: wet, boiling, superficial, brash, beautiful ugly Sydney, developing during my lifetime from a sunlit village into this present day parvenu superficial, brash, beautiful ugly Sydney, developing during my lifetime from a sunlit village into this present day parvenu bastard compound of San Francisco and Chicago’ (quoted in Falkiner, 1992,49).

Lohrey pictures an inner-western Sydney suburban backyard where a pensive figure, sits alone and contemplates … the dense tangle of leaf that reflects each wave of immigrants to the city: fig tree, lemon, grapevine, blue gum, banana palm, white frangipani and there, in a fragrant clump by the fence, a climbing red rose entwined with a scarlet hibiscus, while at their base wild tomato plants run riot. The English, the Mediterranean, the tropical and the native bush entwined in a ceaseless tangle, an above them the sweet heady smell of frangipani floating on an acrid wave of gasoline’ (Lohrey, 1996, 91, quoted in Murphy & Watson, 1997, 12).

Gibson and Connell (2000) have written about Sydney and the photographs of Max Dupain, the detective noir fiction of Cliff Hardy, poets such as Kenneth Slessor, the exuberance of the gay and lesbian Mardi Gras parade through Oxford Street, and the seamy desolation of Sydney’s West encapsulated in rock music by Tex Perkins.

Reading Medan Merdaka

Another reading of place is illustrated by Crang (1998) who describes how the ‘Konigsplein’, the centre of the colonial Dutch administration was transformed into Medan Merdaka of newly independent Indonesia. The new government simply took over the governor’s palace as the presidential palace thus signalling that the new administration was every bit as powerful as their colonial masters. The national mosque was Arabist in its architectural style symbolising pan-national rather than national identity and the Dutch Catholic cathedral remained next door as a tolerant symbol of pancasila. In the centre of Medan Merdaka square is a square tower, the Monas monument that looks over the former colonial buildings. ‘In the monument is a series of forty-eight dioramas, bound into a narrative through their spatial logic—simply by walking from one to the next is enough to link them into a story leaping up to the creation of Indonesia as a modern state. A whole panel is devoted to the United Nations building in New York, not just the people the building – symbolising the moment when the international community recognised the claim of Indonesia as a nation state’ (Crang, 1998, 28).

A sense and spirit of place

Humanistic geographer Tuan (1977) saw place as ‘humanised space’ and developed associated arguments that the essence of place lies in a ‘sense of place’ and a deep feeling of belonging. Casey (2001, 683) explained that humanistic geographers such as Tuan and Relph emphasised the experiential features of place, or its ‘subjective’ or ‘lived’ aspects and as such their writings were natural allies of phenomenology. According to Relph (2001, 11448) phenomenology, as a philosophical method, allowed rigorous interpretations of place using the writings of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty to argue that ideas about place are grounded in experiences of dwelling in specific places, and that these precede all abstraction notions of location, environment, or geography. Phenomenology interrogates identity and sense of place, topophilia, and home. These insights, that waxed and waned in the humanistic geographies of the 1970s and 1980s, have been absorbed into most subsequent discussions of place in Geography.
Sense of place

Cresswell (2009) explains that sense of place refers to the more nebulous meanings associated with a place: evocative feelings about place but Relph distinguished between sense of place and spirit of place or genius of place (genius loci) but both sets of terms referred to the character or personality of a place, which could be reflected in more prosaic phrases such as ‘town character’, or ‘local distinctiveness’ (Hayden, 2001, 11451). The great regional geographers also referred to genius loci11 (Herbertson, 1916, 384).

Sense of place may vary from ‘simple recognition for orientation, through the capacity to respond empathetically to the identities of different places, to a profound association with places as cornerstones of existence and individual identity’ (Relph, 1976, 63).

Spirit of place

Spirit of place comes from the Latin genius loci, but the idea is derived from the ancient and widespread belief that certain places are inhabited by their own gods or spirits. In contemporary thinking it involves a relational interplay between places and human aspirations and actions, the types of ideas taken up by psychogeography. Places accumulate sedimented layers of social, symbolic, psychological, biological and physical meaning to constitute the genius loci (Harvey, 2009, 180). In classical antiquity almost every hill-top, spring, grove, and outcrop of rock had its own guardian spirit, and Greek and Italian farmers walked around the parameters of their fields every month singing hymns and offering sacrifices to evoke the benevolence of the gods towards house and home (Tuan, 1977, 153–4).

Bell & de-Shalit (2011) maintain that contemporary Singapore’s spirit of place is based on material well-being, materialism and meritocracy. But spirit of place goes further than this. Yuen (2005) explains that decorative and ornate shophouses in the Tanjong Katong district, built between 1918 and 1930, occupy a special niche in the hearts of people and have the intangible effect of increasing resident attachment to place’ (Yuen, 2005, 206). The spirit of place in Singapore, seen through recent attempt to search for place identity, involves a search for buildings and places to conserve. Recently the government has made a concerted effort to enhance a sense of place, or rewrite the city’s spirit of place. This involves a search for buildings and places to conserve. This is particularly the case in the context of Aranda, where the spirit of place is preserved through the use of traditional materials and craftsmanship.

Topophilia

Topophilia, as explained by Tuan, is the affective bond between people and place or setting, or ‘all of the human being’s ties with the material environment’ (1974, 93). Tuan explains the most intense aesthetic experiences of humanness are likely to catch one by surprise (94). Rolls (2002, vii ) elucidates, ‘The casual first European observers of country and city found them beautiful . . . everywhere, from the cold wet valleys of Tasmania through the hot sandy plains of the Red Centre to the tropical north, shrubs and flowers bloomed for most of the year’. Tuan writes of ‘landscapes of persistent appeal’ such as mountains and seashores, islands, carefully tended farms, and small towns (Relph, 2001, 11449).

Tuan quotes Strehlow (1947, 30–31) in the context of Aranda, he clings to his native soil with every fibre of his being . . . Today, tears will come into his eyes when he mentions an ancestral home site, which has been, sometimes unwittingly desecrated by white usurpers of group territory. Love of home, longing for home, these are dominating motifs which constantly re-appear also in the myths of the totemic ancestors.' And, ‘He sees recorded in the surrounding landscape the ancient story of the lives and deeds of the immortal beings whom he reveres; beings, who for a brief space may take on his own experience as his fathers and grandfathers and brothers, and as his mothers and sisters. The whole countryside is his living, age-old family tree’ (cited in Tuan, 1974, 99–100).

Pearson (1999) nobly proclaimed, ‘We, as individuals, have within our breasts layers of identity according to sex, sexual preference, culture, religion, recreation, professional ties, locational patriotism and political preference’ but others would assert that an Aboriginal sense of personal identity is derived from only one context, place (Myers, 1991, 54, cited

11 Herbertson observed that regional geography was not solely concerned with materialistic interpretations of geography (and history) ‘There is a genius loci as well as Zeitgeist – a spirit of place as well as of time’ (1916, 384).

12 Cresswell (2002, 17) explains, ‘Auguste’s use of the name non-place does not have the same negative moral connotations as Relph’s “placelessness.” By non-place Auguste is referring to sites marked by the “fleeting, the temporary and ephemeral.” Non-places include motorways, airports, supermarkets – sites where particular histories and traditions are not (allegedly) relevant – unrooted places marked by mobility and travel. Non-place is especially the space of travellers.’

Large airports can hardly be thought of as non-places when judged by the number of people they employ. The 77 000 people employed at Heathrow Airport presumably regard it as an authentic place.

The land is my backbone. I only stand straight, happy and proud and not ashamed about my colour, because I still have land. I can paint, dance, create and sing as my ancestors did before me. I think of land as the history of my nation. It tells me of how we came into being, and by what system we must live. My great ancestors, who lived in the time of history, planned everything that we practice now. The law of history says we must not take land, fight over land, steal land, give land, and so on. My land is mine only because I came in spirit from the land, and so did my ancestors from the land. My land is my foundation’ (Theophanous, 1998, 101).

In his Australia Day address, Flannery (2002) said Australians could only become a ‘true people’ by developing ‘deep, sustaining roots in the land.’ He said the land was ‘the only thing that we all, uniquely, share in common. It is at once our inheritance, our sustenance, and the only force ubiquitous and powerful enough to craft a truly Australian people.’

A number of contemporary writers apparently experience a spirituality informed by Aboriginal people-land relations.

McKenna (2002) reconstructed the spirit of place of his eight acres of land at Towamba on the NSW South Coast. ‘I now look down the river and see the flats where the corroborees took place. … Aboriginal people had performed corroborees on or near this site for thousands of years. And they moved along this same river valley on their way to and from the Bogong moth festival on the Monaro plains’ (2002, 228).

Shakespeare (2004) tells of an Aboriginal man from the east coast of Tasmania who rediscovered his spirituality through a dream. He dreams of walking along the beach and on being surrounded by a mob of Aborigines taunting him about being non-Aboriginal. In the dream he tore open his shirt to reveal body scars, big cicatrices of the Oyster Bay people. After the dream he affirmed his Aboriginality to the community at large. (Shakespeare, 2004. 180)

Main’s (2005) speaks of the deep connection that Wiradjuri had to land and the developing links that non-Aboriginal people were experiencing: ‘I can just feel an enormous sort of presence here, thousands and thousands of years of human habitation and millions of years of life forces going on here’ (2005, 259).

Anthropologist, Rose (2001) discussed white pastoralists from South Australia, Central Australia and Northern Australia and their response to place. In so doing she counsels that, ‘The country that gets into people’s blood invariably contains the blood and sweat of Aboriginal people as well as settlers. It may contain convict blood, and the remains of humans and non-humans’ (2001, 8).

When Yunnupingi said the ‘land is my backbone’ the ‘land’ the Australian Settlers stole was, in effect, hearth, home and the source and focus of spirit to the Aborigine (Waitt, McGuirk, Dunn, Hartig & Burnley, 2000, 166-8). It is home, according to Relph where love of place is strongest (Relph, 2001, 11449). For other Australians it may be the bush, ‘After the last gapped wire on a post, homecoming for me, to enter the gum forest’ (Murray, 2007, 31); for some, the bush (Facey, 1981), some, the rainforest (Hill, 2004) some, the beach (Drewe, 2008) some, the desert (Rothwell, 2007), some, the mountains (Thomas, 2003) and some, the city (Connell, 2000). ‘Dwelling in this sense does not mean simply to dwell in (and build) a house, but to dwell in and build a whole world to which we are attached’ (Cresswell, 2009 170).

A darker side to place

There is a darker side to home as a place. NSW geographers write ‘geographies of heteropatriarchy’ and a gender division of labour between home and the workplace (Waitt, McGuirk, Dunn, Hartig & Burnley, 2000, 444–446) and Rose (2003) sees home as ‘ideologically idealized as a haven in a heartless world, it is actually a space in which women are expected to work, cooking, cleaning and caring, without wages or privacy’ (315). Like much other feminist work, feminist geographers, such as Rose, see domestic space as restrictive and oppressive, a space into which women are confined and where various forms of exploitation took place. ‘To feminist geographers home frequently features as a site of patriarchal authority often associated with extremes of abuse, boredom, and backbreaking labour. To others, home is a place associated with violence against and abuse of children’ (Cresswell, 2009, 173).

Nevertheless, place as ‘homeplace’ can engender powerful emotional bonds that can, for example, draw back refugees and those who have been uprooted in spite of the most adverse circumstances. Because of the intensity of these associations, in phenomenological interpretations ‘home’ is identified as the archetypal place.

Psychogeography

Parallel to, but quite separate from humanistic geography, is a literary style of writing and philosophy that draws from a sense of place. Psychogeography was defined by Debord as ‘the study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behaviours of individuals’ (Debord, 1981, 5, cited in Coverley, 2010, 10). Something of the flavour of the kinds of writing, and a more than a nod to geographical thinking, is
expressed by Self (2003, 69) ‘I have taken to long distance walking as a means of dissolving the mechanised matrix which comprises the space-time continuum and decouples human from physical geography’. Most of the writing about psychogeography today seems to emanate from London (Coverley) but it has an interesting genesis in the various philosophical and literary movements that flowered in post-war Paris (Wark, 2011). Self’s writing should be accessible to able high school Geography students.

Contested place

Newcastle can be regarded as a contested place where ‘male, blue-collar and Anglo-centric narratives’ (Dunn, McGuirk & Winchester, 1995, 149), are the hegemonic discourses of this place; and where Aboriginal, non-Anglo-Celtic, indigenous and women’s voices are silenced. Of course, women are ever present in Newcastle but, ‘Whereas the steel, shipbuilding and coal industries have been central to the identity of places such as Newcastle and Wollongong, their clothing and textiles industries have not’ (159).

The industrial city of Wollongong became something of a contested place when a team of marketers attempted to transform Wollongong’s physical urban spaces into ‘exciting’, ‘hip' and ‘cool’ places for the creative class (Waitt & Gibson, 2009, 1227), changing the metropolitan spaces of a 20th-century working port and steel mill into a vibrant 21st-century city of the ‘new’ globalising, post-Fordist, metropolitan economy? Port Kembla residents were reluctant to embrace these changes. ‘Amongst the ageing Macedonian community of Port Kembla, there is a documented nostalgia for the past and a drive for a far more mundane redevelopment of Wentworth Street, along the lines of a traditional community centre, with a butcher, post office, pubs and shops’ (1240).

Country Australia is also a site of contestation. When newcomers to rural NSW arrive from the city to erect new off-the-plan houses surrounded by Colourbond fences they misunderstand the ways of the country, symbolised by the more aesthetically open barbed wire fences, structures that are ‘visually and physically permeable’ (Connell & McManus, 2011, 130), signalling a more open sense of place.

Jess and Massey (1995, 134) see the contestation over place in terms of rival claims to define the meaning of place, asking ‘whose place is it? and thereby people’s rights to control their use or future. Harvey, (1996, 302) points out that, ‘place is the preferred terrain of much environmental politics. Some of the fiercest movements of opposition to the political-economy of capitalistic place construction are waged over the issue of the preservation or upsetting of valued environmental qualities in particular places’ (302). Indeed Harvey (2009, 179) sees place as the locus for resisting change and fermenting change. He speaks of a ‘militant particularism’ in place.

Cresswell writes of people apparently ‘out of place’, ‘Black people are often stopped while driving through cities in the United States on suspicion of having committed some crime. This has been called driving while black’. People who appear to be of Middle Eastern origin have to think twice before using public transport or taking a flight as they are frequently stopped and treated with suspicion. Young people in ‘hoodies’ are similarly frowned upon when gathered at a street corner’ (Cresswell 2009, 176). Some of the ways by which place is constantly contested, transgressed and resisted by the excluded is taken up in the section below ‘power in place’ but here the emphasis is on youth.

Whereas the child is allocated appropriate places to inhabit in the home, school and designated play space and the adult have recourse to the pub, club, race track or workplace, youth often has to negotiate contested places. Children are under almost constant surveillance in the places they occupy ‘Youth thus have a liminal status and although this means they have no place made for them by the mainstream it does not mean they have no place at all’ (Anderson, 2010, 134). ‘The street’ is a metaphor for all the outdoor places that youth like to occupy from roads, shopping malls, public parks, derelict sites, car parks and beaches. These public places are important arenas for young people wanting to escape adult surveillance and ‘define their own identities and ways of being’ (Valentine, 2004, 396). These places may be claimed by youth for a time as sites of resistance but they are subject to reclamation from adult society. Such places can be risky places but they also become sites of creativity, invention and potential (139).

Cresswell (2004,103–4) lists a number of other groups that have been studied by geographers as being ‘out of place’ including, mentally disturbed people, gypsy-travellers, political protesters, non-white people, gay, lesbian, bisexuals, the homeless, prostitutes and the disabled.

Young people can bring interesting insights into the contestation of place. Wood (2009) describes the observations of a fourteen-year-old Geography student in the UK describing his collage, ‘In the middle underneath the dominant culture, are things that make [this place] what it is. There are sub-cultures such as Goths shown as well as Chavs15. Both cultures are sub-cultures as they are sets of people with distinct beliefs and characteristics – theirs being music. There are shown because looking around [this place] I can see lots of sub-cultures, each with their own unique places to “hang”… there are also pictures which aren’t generally from [this place], but show the types of behaviour seen throughout [this place] such as binge drinking, drugs, teenage pregnancy … I put them in as to many sub-cultures or teenagers they are part of everyday life’.

A study of the least favourite places in Edinburgh, where teenagers experienced contested space and dangerous places, found that the presence of a particular youth group, the ‘Goths’, made young people avoid that area. ‘They felt

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14 In the Australian equivalent of a chav is a bogan or westie (in NSW)

15 Chavs

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PLACE WRITING: narratives, experience and identities

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that the street belonged to those teenagers who, through their attitude, dress and behaviour, appropriated this place’ (Travlou, Eubanks, Thompson & Maxwell, 2008). A much earlier study of gangs in Philadelphia demonstrated how groups marked out their place using graffiti. In Philadelphia, wall graffiti offer an accurate indicator of turf ownership. As a general rule, the incidence of gang graffiti becomes denser with increasing proximity to the core of a territory. Overwhelmingly graffiti consist of signatures, a nickname, often followed by the gang name’ (Ley & Cybriwsky 1974, 496).

Primary students from Brisbane’s inner city suburb of Fortitude Valley were encouraged to explore their place using ICT resources. The ‘Students gathered material for their web pages on walks through the Valley, using digital and disposable cameras, sketch books and notepads. They began putting together their individual web pages by creating large-scale, annotated collages of aspects of the Valley that were significant to them … The result is a series of compelling and evocative readings and writings of everyday cultural (re)productions of the Valley seen through the eyes of these Murri children. The web pages combine photographic images of themselves in relation to the Valley’s topography and aspects that serve as icons or tropes for the multicultural life of the Valley. For example, one image shows a Murri student - identified as the writer’s cousin - sitting in the lap of a large statue of a Chinese doll in the heart of Chinatown. Others capture distinctive Chinese architectural shapes in the form of pagodas and symbolic gates, or shop windows displaying the headless bodies of plucked ducks ready for cooking. These pictures graphically portray the enacted identity of these Aboriginal young people “rubbing up against” key elements of Asian ethnic identities’ (Lankshear & Knobel, 1998).

The power of place

De Blij has written recently on the power of place, ‘From the uneven distribution of natural resources to the unequal availability of opportunity, place remains a powerful arbitrator. Many hundreds of millions of farmers in river basins of Asia and Africa live their lives much as their distant ancestors did, still remote from the forces of globalization, children as well as adults still at high personal risk and great material disadvantage. Tens of millions of habitants of isolated mountain valleys from the Andes to the Balkans and from the Caucasus to Kashmir are as bound to their isolated abodes as their forebears were. Of the seven billion current passengers on Cruiseship Earth, the overwhelming majority (the myth of mass migration notwithstanding) will die very near the cabin in which they were born ’ (2009). His essential thesis, that geography matters can be summarised in the words of Sen (2006) ‘Depending on where they are born, children can have the means and facilities for great prosperity or face the likelihood of desperately deprived lives.’

Other ways in which geographers have looked at the power of place have included views from economic geography. The end of a ‘Fordist’ method of mass production, mass consumption of commodities and Keynesian economics in the early 1970s saw economic geographers writing about flexible accumulation and flexible specialisation (Amin & Thrift, 1992). Just as small scale enterprises thrived in parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire in the UK in the 19thc as a result of a combination of local expertise, a flexible labour force, spirit of cooperation and specialised services, so to economic geographers began to identify certain places that appeared to exhibit the power of place. Included in the new lists were centres of research and development such as Silicon Valley in California, financial hubs such as the City of London, centres of the movie industry such as Los Angeles, Baden-Württemburg in Germany where large industrial firms were supplied by a host of local subcontractors, and, industrial districts in semi-rural areas such as ‘Third Italy’. The latter is an interesting example.

Third Italy was based on dense networks of flexible, strongly related, small and medium sized firms in craft-based industries (clothing, ceramics) in a number of specialized industrial districts that have developed since their efflorescence in the Renaissance. Third Italy still exists but in a vastly changed form. Some of these small firms have been subject to takeovers, some have outsourced their production to Romania, Tunisia or Vietnam and many now employ migrant labour as the Italian demographics change, thus undermining the apparent advantages of craft based production (Hadjimichalis, 2006). The industries are far less competitive because, since Italy adopted the Euro in 2001, and they are unable to exploit a comparative advantage over other producers through successive devaluations of the local currency. Further, the protectionist advantages that Third Italy enjoyed under the Multi-Fibre Agreement ceased in 2005.

More recently, Yeung (2006) identified a number of distinctive places that have developed export oriented industrial production at historically unprecedented rates: China’s Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta, South Korea’s Seoul Metropolitan Area, and Taiwan’s Taipei-Hsinchu, Malaysia’s Penang and Selangor states and Thailand’s Greater Bangkok region. Each is a distinctive assemblage of translocal linkages ‘between local firms and lead firms in global production networks’ (28). Each place is different; each demonstrates the power of place. Rojana Industrial Park, in the centre of the Extended Bangkok Metropolitan Region, comprising of the eleven provinces that surround Bangkok, has former rice growing villages are virtually encircled by factories and major roads. Of the hundred-odd factories less than 20 per cent are domestically owned with some 70 per cent Japanese owned (Rigg, Veeravong, Veeravong, & Rohitarachoon, 2008). They produce electronics, automobile parts, car assembly, textiles and apparel, footwear, and food and food processing goods destined for export. Most of the workers are migrants from the northeast, Thailand’s poorest region.

By way of contrast The Seoul Metropolitan Area contains two of the world’s largest producers of digital TV and mobile phones – Samsung Electronics and LG Electronics (Yeung, 2006, 23). Both companies produce most of their products from the region rather than outsourcing or sub-contracting; both invest huge sums in research and development.
Power in place

Scale is another important geographic concept. As far as place is concerned, evidence exists of a power shift taking place whereby there is a ‘downward’ transfer of power from nation states to regional places and an ‘upward’ shift to supranational bodies like the European Union (MacKinnon, 2009). It will be interesting to see how the various free trade agreements between the various ASEAN nations and China affect regional developments in Southeast Asia.

There are other ways of examining power in place. Foucault suggested that we should view the world as a set of overlapping ‘heterotopias’, places that are simultaneously home to conflicting performances and utopian in the sense that ‘they are not spaces of containment and control, but rather of experimentation, fluidity and disorder’ (Mitchell, 2000, 215). Much of Foucault’s work was centred on unearthing geographies of control that modernity had instituted, from the asylum, the schoolroom to the panopticon. Heterotopias can sometimes appear to all too evident in various places such as the shopping mall and its CCTV cameras, on the one hand, and the public occupation of public places to protest about the inequities occasioned by the finance industry.

Urban places generally can be thought of as containers of social power (Cresswell, 1996), and as the locus of power struggles. What is at stake is who gains political access to territory? Who gets to own, plan, design, use or demolish various kinds of built space (Hayden, 2001, Harvey, 1992)? Pred (1984, cited in Cresswell, 2009, 175) proposes a view of place as a process where the activities of people and institutions produce and are produced by social structures that are saturated with power. They can also be sites of exclusion and oppression where uneven power relations are played out (Major, 2010, 90). They can, as Harvey insists, be often used in quite regressive and reactionary ways. He points to the rise of gated communities in urban and suburban places.

Kenna (2010) studied Macquarie Links, one of Sydney’s largest gated estates, to discover that security concerns were the foremost concern for the residents. The gated community’s proximity to a large public housing estate that experienced ‘riots’ in 2005 and subsequent furore in the press about ‘rampant crime’ had led other geographers to describe Macquarie Links as Sydney’s most pointed example of estate securitisation in response to perceived threats of crime’ (McGuirk & Dowling 2007, 28).

There is also an external dimension to the nature of power in place. If we are to accept the views of the geographers working at the Open University in the UK about the construction of social space, and the relational nature of such space, then the social relations that bind places together are relations of power and the geography of power can be traced’ (Massey, 1995, 69). ‘Contacts, chains of command, personal interlinkages, and relations of social power and domination are increasingly stretched out across the surface

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6 Goss (1999, 45) sees the contemporary shopping mall as sites of contested social power in place where ‘multiple images of ideal times and places combine to create an illusion of the world standing outside of everyday life’ One is reminded of the kinds of enacted utopia, represented, contested and inverted as seen in Canada’s West Edmonton Mall with its pirate ships, Bourbon Street and surf beach.

17 Horvath (2004, 96) describes metropolitan Los Angeles—’with its estimated 500 gated subdivisions, 2,000 street gangs, 4,000 mini-malls, 20,000 sweatshops, and 100,000 homeless residents—is a dystopian symbol of Dickensian inequalities and intractable racial contradictions.”
of the planet. And in the midst of this global connectedness places and cultures are being restructured: on the one hand previous coherences are being disrupted, old notions of the local place are being interrupted by new connections with a world beyond; on the other, new claims to the usually exclusive – character of places, and who they belong to are being made’ (Massey & Jess, 1995, 1)

There is a geography of power emanating from the global and local reach of each transnational corporation operating within and outside Australia. Each enterprise exercises a different geography of power as they draw places differently into the unequal power relations that they create (70). Massey and Jess remind us that there are also military, social and political inequalities of power operating, in conjunction with, and separately from economic ones.

As Massey says, ‘Power is one of the few things you rarely see a map of. Yet a geography of power – that is, of social relations stretched over space – is what sustains much of what we experience around us in the local area – from the nervousness of going down a particular street at night, to the financing of a local company down the road, to the arrival of the latest US movie at the multiplex. And it is out of the intersections of all these geographies that each ‘place’ acquires both its uniqueness and its interdependence with elsewhere’ (Massey, 1995 71).

Both terms ‘power of place’ and ‘power in place’ are deeply imbricated. The term ‘power of place’ can be used as an evocative term, a means of analysing social life in existing places, in advocating the preservation of historic places and a broader setting for the design of new places (Hayden, 2001, 11451) but it also has a metaphorical aspect where phrases such as ‘knowing one’s place’ or ‘a woman’s place’ still carry some territorial meanings and imply political power relationships (Hayden, 2001, Massey, 1994).

Feminist geography has done much to uncover these power relationships. McDowell (1999, 4) melds a sense of positionality with a definition of place to explain that, ‘It is socio-spatial practices that define places and these practices result in overlapping and intersecting places with multiple and changing boundaries, constituted and maintained by social relations of power and exclusion. Places are made by power relations which construct the rules, which define the boundaries. These boundaries are both social and spatial – they define who belongs to a place and who may be excluded, as well as the location or site of the experience’.

Conclusion

A number of writers encapsulate the complexities of place. Escobar explains that we are ‘place-lings’, based on the phenomenological assertion that as embodied subjects we always find ourselves in place (2001, 289). He reminds us that place continues to be important in the lives of many people, but particularly so if we regard place as ‘the experience of a particular location with some measure of groundedness (however unstable), sense of boundaries (however, permeable), and connection to everyday life, even if this identity is constructed, traversed by power, and never fixed’ (288). Tuan (1977) would see groundedness as essential, remarking that such a place would have shrines and monuments but would be unlikely to have museums and societies for the preservation of the past. Massey is adamant that if there is any uniqueness about a place then, ‘it is always hybrid, arising out of the particular mix of social relations’ (1994, 5). Agnew (2011, 328) reminds us that new ICT technologies are part of new ‘place-making’ projects rather than simply creating a totally new cyberspace world. But Harvey can have the last word about place, ‘Almost everyone who attempts to theorise about place starts at one point … only to shift somewhere else when they attempt to unravel the richness of complexity of the idea’ (2009, 193).

The Draft F–12 Australian Curriculum: Geography clearly defines place but does not capture its complexity. It signals that the meaning given to place by people may differ but then leaves this proposition open. The Curriculum mentions scale and interconnection but there again teachers may need some assistance in teasing out the nuanced meanings of these interconnections. Quite soundly the Curriculum wants teachers to engage with places in the early years of schooling and then progressively understand, explain and think about place. It is here that some of the ideas outlined in this discussion of place and the ways in which students develop an understanding of place according to the Draft Curriculum might be best borne in mind. The Geography teacher needs a rich and deep understanding of place to facilitate curiosity in the students as they, in turn, develop their geographical imaginations.


• progressing from describing the characteristics of places to explaining them. These characteristics include population, climate, economy, landforms, built environment, soils and vegetation, communities, water resources, cultures, minerals, landscape, and recreational and scenic quality. Some characteristics are tangible, such as rivers and buildings, while others are intangible, such as wilderness and socioeconomic status
• exploring people’s aesthetic, emotional, cultural and spiritual connections with places; the role of places in their own feelings of identity, sense of place and belonging; and the ways they experience and use places
• recognising that places may be altered and remade by people, and that changes promoted by one group may be contested by others
• using the uniqueness of places to explain why the outcomes of environmental and human processes may vary, and why similar problems may require different strategies in different places (ACARA, 2011,7).
PLACE WRITING: narratives, experience and identities


PLACE WRITING: narratives, experience and identities

Hadjimichailis, C. (2006). The end of ‘Third Italy’ as we knew it, Antipode, 38.1.82–106


Major, B.(2010). Aspects of Place, in Teaching Geography Autumn, 90–2


Tuan Y-F (1977). Space and Place, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press


We are delighted to bring you the latest news about three keynote speakers for the AGTA 2013 Conference. Professors David Lambert and Simon Catling from the United Kingdom and Professor Peter Newman from Australia have accepted AGTA’s invitation to be keynote speakers at the AGTA 2013 Conference in Perth!

This is wonderful news given David Lambert and Simon Catling have considerable experience with the national curriculum in the United Kingdom. Simon Catling’s experience with primary geography implementation in particular ensures that this conference will appeal to primary school teachers as well as secondary school teachers. Peter Newman is the Professor of Sustainability at Curtin University and the Director of the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute. He has recently been appointed as Chief Writer – Transport for the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, (IPCC).
Tourism is one of Australia’s major industries accounting for more than 2.5% of Australia’s gross domestic product in 2010 (Tourism Research Australia, 2011). In the same year tourism directly employed 4.5% of Australia’s workforce with a significant proportion more relying indirectly on tourism for their employment. While capital cities, like Sydney and Melbourne, tend to dominate the limelight, regional tourist destinations account for 46% of all tourism expenditure. Here in the regions, tourism can be crucial to local communities accounting for significant employment and economic activity.

The nature of regional tourism

Regional tourism in Australia is as variable as the geography and climate of the country itself. In New South Wales alone there are 14 designated tourists regions, ranging from the Hunter Valley, with its focus on wine and food to the Northern Rivers where beach holidays dominate and the Blue Mountains where nature based tourism is the dominate form. Just as the nature of each tourist region varies widely so does the nature of the tourists who visit them. One common characteristic, however, is that more than likely in most regions they will be a domestic tourism. Tables 1-3 show the dominance of domestic tourism in the regions. In Victoria, for example, only 7% of international tourism expenditure takes place outside of Melbourne.

Table One: Value of Domestic Day Tourism 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Value in A$ (millions)</th>
<th>Percentage of State total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>New South Wales</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional NT</td>
<td>42</td>
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Source: Tourism Research Australia, 2010
Regional Economies and the place of tourism

Table Two: Value of Domestic Overnight Tourism 2010

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<td>Darwin</td>
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<tr>
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Source: Tourism Research Australia, 2010

Table Three: Value of International Tourism 2010

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</table>

Source: Tourism Research Australia, 2010

Figure Three: Historic Victor Harbour is located less than 90 minutes drive from Adelaide. Regional tourist destinations, such as this, account for nearly 60% of South Australia’s domestic day trip tourist revenue.
The data clearly shows that international tourists to Australia tend to concentrate their visit to capital city destinations, usually at the expense of the regions. Of course this means that the economic benefit is likewise concentrated in the big cities. For example in 2010, 31% of international tourism revenue was concentrated on Sydney, (Melbourne had 21%). Tropical North Queensland was the highest ranking regional destination accounting for just 5% (Tourism Research Australia, 2010, p.36).

**Economic benefits of tourism to the regions**

Domestic tourists are therefore the key drivers of regional tourism. Whether it be as day trippers or for overnight and extended breaks, domestic tourists play a crucial role in the success of regional tourism.

Interesting research conducted by the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia into the habits of self contained recreational vehicle (RV) tourists highlights the importance of such domestic tourists to the regions. This segment of tourists is typically retirees aged between 55 and 75 and their numbers are rapidly growing as Australia vast baby boomer population retires. They spend on average a staggering 163 days a year travelling in their campervans spending around $70 a day, most of this in regional areas. They stay longer and spend more money in regional areas than any other type of tourist.

It is this “lingering” in a location that is very important as it means that the tourist is not only economically active in the tourism sector but in the broader local economy. The typical RV tourist for example spends $235 a week on fuel and vehicle maintenance and another $160 a week on living expenses, such as groceries (Campervan & Motorhome Club 2011). Such expenditure means that the value of the tourist spend in regional economies is very significant beyond just the tourism sector.

Every year the central western New South Wales town of Parkes is inundated with jump suit wearing Elvis Presley impersonators and fans of the long dead “King of Rock”. The town hosts the annual Elvis Revival Festival annually and the economic benefit the festival brings to local economy is considerable. Research by Brennan-Horley et al (2007) identified the broader economic benefits to the local community. Table 4 indicates the impact of the festival on selected businesses within the town. It is noteworthy that it was not just those businesses directly related to tourism, the information centre, motel and caravan park that gained a boost from the tourism event but also non-related businesses such as bookshops and the local clubs and cafés.

**Table 4: Impact of the Parkes Elvis Revival on turnover of selected businesses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Type</th>
<th>Average increase in turnover during the Festival</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourist information and services</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered club</td>
<td>50 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail books</td>
<td>50 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafés and restaurants</td>
<td>20 – 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan park</td>
<td>20 – 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motels</td>
<td>20 – 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newagencies</td>
<td>0 – 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacies</td>
<td>0 – 20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Brennan-Horley et al (2007)

This type of expenditure is often referred to as indirect expenditure as it is not directly related to tourism activities. For example a person buying a book in Parkes is engaged in a retail other than tourism activity. They may still have bought the book if they were not on holidays but they would have bought the book in their local area. Hence the bookshop in Parkes sold the book because of the tourism activity in the region and we can therefore say that the sale was indirectly related to tourism. In this way the broader local economy benefits from the tourist not just those businesses directly related to tourism.

This indirect economic activity extends to employment as well. A study by Essential Economics (2002, cited Jacobson et al 2003, p. 23) showed that along the Surf Coast in Victoria there were 3060 people directly employed through tourism but another 1850 were indirectly employed. While the study is a little dated now it none the less highlights the significant impact that tourism has on the wider community and their economic prosperity.

Another, and in many ways a more significant, economic impact of tourism is known as the multiplier effect. This relates to the way a dollar spent by a tourist flows around the economy into multiple ways. For example, a tourist pays $120 for a night in a motel. The motel uses a portion of this to pay the person who cleans the room, say $30. The cleaner then
uses a portion of this $30 to buy lunch at a local sandwich shop, say $10. The shop owner then uses a portion of this to some of his produce from a local farmer and so on. The point is that the original $120 paid by a tourist has flowed around the local economy and generated considerable economic activity.

Importantly the original $120 came from outside the local economy and it can therefore be seen as new money. Economists call such a money an injection because it was earned in a different economy from where it was spent, therefore they can be viewed as export earnings for the local economy (note that the term export used here does not refer to international exports only but rather any revenue earned outside of the local economy). Injections are important for the stimulation of local economies. The economy of large cities have the potential to generate injections from a diversity of sources, there can many different type of export orientated businesses. For many regional economies tourism is one of the few export related businesses and it is therefore crucial to economic stimulation.

The importance of tourism to relatively small communities can be seen in Port Arthur located in regional Tasmania. The former convict settlement is now a major tourist attraction and has seen a significant increase in tourist numbers since 2000. At the same time the Tasman Council local government area has seen considerable investment in local infrastructure which in turn has supported the growth of restaurants and conference facilities. This has further enhanced employment and economic opportunities within the region. The site itself provides direct employment for close to 300 people and generates more than $40 million in revenue (OECD, 2009).

Infrastructure

Significant and consistent tourism often provides an impetus for local government to invest more substantially in transport and related infrastructure and this has both an economic and social benefit to the local resident population.

The Richmond Shire Council local government area in Central Queensland is home to the Marin Fossil Museum and Kronosaurus Korner Information Centre, both attract considerable numbers of tourist to the area. In response the council has recently upgraded the facilities around Lake Fred Tritton to provide more services and amenities for tourists. However, it is not just tourists who have benefited from the redevelopment but the community as a whole (Queensland Tourism, 2011).

Another example of where tourism has provided an impetus for considerable economic development is found in the New South Wales town of Temora. Located in the state’s south west, Temora is home to one of the largest aviation museums in the country. Uniquely the aircraft at the museum fly and regular flying weekends attract enthusiasts in their thousands to the small town. Many of these people fly their own small aircraft and park their planes at the airfield. Apart from the direct economic benefit created from these tourists the museum has prompted a major redevelopment of the local airport. The airfield now has three runways, one large enough to land large commercial jets, which sometimes participate in the flying displays. The redevelopment known as Airpark Temora supports a considerable number of aircraft related businesses and further expansions are planned.
Regional Economies and the place of tourism

Thus, tourism can play a very significant role in the growth and development of regional economies. For many regions, tourism provides the most significant injection of money into the local economy and through the multiplier effect, this money flows through the entire economy stimulating economic activity and employment across the broad spectrum of the economy not just the tourism sector. It also can be an impetus for the improvement of local infrastructure and services, and this in turn also benefits the local community.

References


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Figure 1 photograph, J. Sillar

Figure Seven: The Temora Aviation Museum has generated considerable economic development in the south west NSW town.
Editorial policy attempts to:

- promote material which will assist the study and teaching of geography
- encourage teachers to share their ideas on teaching geography
- provide a means by which teachers can publish articles
- inform readers of developments in geographical education

Articles are sought reflecting research and innovations in teaching practices in schools. From time to time issues of the Bulletin address specific themes.

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2. Content: Articles, not normally exceeding 5000 words (no minimum specification), should be submitted to the Editor at the following address:

   PO Box 577, Leichhardt; NSW, 2040

   Articles are welcomed from tertiary and secondary teachers, students, business and government representatives. Articles may also be solicited from time to time. Articles submitted will be evaluated according to their ability to meet the objectives outlined above.

3. Format: Original in Word format on disk (or forwarded electronically via email attachment) plus one hard copy should be submitted. Tables should be on separate pages, one per page, and figures should be clearly drawn, one per page, in black on opaque paper suitable for reproduction. Photographs should be in high resolution digital format. An indication should be given in the text of approximate location of tables, figures and photographs. Every illustration needs a caption. Photographs, tables and illustrations sourced from the internet must acknowledge the source and have a URL link to the original context.

4. Title: The title should be short, yet clear and descriptive. The author’s name should appear in full, together with a full title of position held and location of employment.

5. Covering Letter: A covering letter, with return forwarding address should accompany all submitted articles. If the manuscript has been submitted to another journal, this should be stated clearly.

6. Photo of Contributor: Contributors should enclose a passport-type photograph and a brief biographical statement.

7. References: References should follow the conventional author-date format:

Harrison, T. L. (1973a) Railway to Jugiong Adelaide: The Rosebud Press. (2nd Ed.)

8. Italics should be indicated by underlining.

9. Spelling should follow the Macquarie Dictionary, and Australian place names should follow the Geographical Place Names Board for the appropriate state.
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Articles are submitted to two referees. Any decisions as to the applicability to secondary and/or tertiary education are made by the referees. Authors, it is suggested, should direct articles according to editorial policy.

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