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## **Narratives of Place and Land: Teaching Indigenous Histories in Australian and New Zealand Teacher Education**

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*Abstract: This article offers a trans-Tasman critique of approaches to the teaching of history in New Zealand and Australia. Taking knowledge out of place and time and presenting it in textbooks is a conflicted task for schooling in both countries. The disembodiment of knowledge in history books has led students to the proclamation that the teaching of history in schools is 'boring' and irrelevant to their lives. The authors seek a way out of this dilemma in proposing that the teaching of Indigenous history in schools must recognise that Indigenous historical narratives are intimately tied to the ecologies of places – whether they rural, remote or urban. We propose an approach to teaching history that gets students out of the classroom, and 'into place' alongside Indigenous custodians of local knowledge. This provides a means of creating an affective and emotional sense of 'belonging' to history that textbooks cannot provide.*

### **The Problem with Textbooks**

The problems caused by continued reliance on learning history from books was well-demonstrated some years ago in the Australian school-based research of Anna Clarke (2008) who, remarked that the teaching of history had become so dreadfully stultifying, that students found it, 'as boring as bat shit' (p. 22). Student disengagement from the discipline was also observed at that time by the Australian Prime Minister who noted that Australians generally knew little about their own history (Harrison, 2013). Moreover, this history is usually taught from the perspective of the coloniser, through for example, the writing-over of Aboriginal places with English names, and employing western approaches to knowledge production in the selection and analysis of historical documents.

Here, we note the structure of the Australian history syllabus (NSW Education Standards Authority, 2018) that begins with the centrality of the individual, and then moves on to study the individual's place in the community, and subsequently to a study of the individual's place in national and international contexts. An alternative approach might be to subvert the centrality of the individual through the syllabus to a primary focus on the community and the individual's place within that Community (Yunkaporta, 2009). Manning found similar problems during his doctoral research in the Port Nicholson Block area of New Zealand in 2008. He later advised (2017b) that while the new curriculum (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2010) provides teachers with a greater degree of flexibility, it still leaves the inclusion of Māori historical content dependent upon the whims of predominantly Pākehā (non-Māori) history teachers and textbook authors.

Our objective in writing this article, therefore, is to flag an alternative approach to the teaching of history that relies on partnership with Indigenous communities and affective

learning experienced in places where their Indigenous histories are performed, felt and thought about (Somerville & Perkins, 2011; Keenan, 2000). We draw on the work of Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005), and the key concept of 'place' in relation to Australian and New Zealand schools so as to explore the role of affective pedagogies in connecting teachers and students of history to both their cognitive and affective senses of 'self' and 'belonging'.

Our focus is upon how the teaching of history might provide students with a sense of belonging, and more specifically on how students can be enabled to reinhabit places with a sense of reciprocity and emotion through pedagogical practices that revolve around socio-ecological actions involving the restoration of local lands, waterways and Indigenous stories of place. The problem of decontextualized learning and teaching is then examined in the context of students learning through affective and emotional methods and we draw on the theoretical work of Elizabeth Ellsworth and Sharon Todd to elucidate what affective pedagogies might look like.

We subsequently adopt an auto-ethnographic approach to present a series of 'tales from the field' in a way that recalls the recommendations of Van Maanen (1988) and Vellerman (2003). It is auto-ethnographic in the sense that we are using a process of self-reflection and writing to explore our personal experiences to consider how they converge and diverge and relate to wider cultural, historical, political and social meanings and understandings of history. Hence our 'tales from the field' recall the work of Vellerman (2003) in that we, too, believe that sharing a tale, "does more than recount events, it recounts events in a way that renders them intelligible, thus conveying not just information but also understanding. We might therefore be tempted to describe [our] narrative[s] as a genre of explanation" (Vellerman, 2003, p.1).

However, before we share our two major 'tales from the field', we would draw attention to urban challenges facing teachers of history in urban environs on both sides of the Tasman Sea. This discussion will serve to explain, (i) why we feel the teaching of history needs to be 'saved from the textbook' in both countries and, (ii) why (Indigenous) place/land-based pedagogies are not exclusively rural phenomena. It also serves as a contextual backdrop to our first 'tale from the field'. This introductory 'tale from the field' supports the narratives that follow by exemplifying the problems central to this article. It involves the recollection of a lesson observed by Manning (Manning, 2008). This initial 'tale' reiterates the importance of place-conscious pedagogies for teachers who teach about Indigenous histories in both rural and urban settings. The next two 'tales from the field' reflect upon our respective experiences as teacher educators involving urban water ways in Sydney (Australia) and Wellington (New Zealand). These parallel 'tales' further illustrate the value of telling stories to keep things 'in place' and to teach 'with' Indigenous peoples, 'in place'; rather than 'about' them (i.e. via textbooks). Our conclusions underline future opportunities for the development of innovative /Indigenous community partnerships to address the problems central to this article.

### **Belonging to Place: Recurring Urban Challenges**

Larissa Behrendt (1994) encapsulates some of the imposed challenges of 'belonging' currently facing Aboriginal people in Sydney to argue that urban Aboriginal communities pose the greatest difficulty for non-Aboriginal people: 'we are often considered by outsiders to have lost our culture and to be completely integrated into non-Aboriginal life' (pp. 56-57). Behrendt (1994) and others (Harrison, Page & Tobin, 2016) highlight how the prevailing non-Indigenous discourses of the city are yet to recognise Sydney as an Indigenous place. Yet, over 52,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live, work and go to schools in

the Sydney region (Biddle & Wilson, 2013). Sydney is not ‘Country’ for some of the Indigenous population, yet they have chosen to make it their home. Their children rely on the support of family and community (Harrison & Sellwood, 2016). They also need to know that their cultural background is supported in local schools and their surrounding communities. They particularly need to know that Aboriginal knowledges *are* recognised and supported by teachers in the school. Behrendt shows us how the biggest challenges come from non-Indigenous communities, including schools. These schools need to be more effective at teaching ‘by example’, and we have presented the case for an affective pedagogy in this paper as a contribution to ensuring that schools are culturally safe places to be. New Zealand teachers of history also need to consider the challenges of ‘belonging’ that face Māori people who now live in cities.

Irihapeti Ramsden (1994) forewarned us that the dominant Pākehā (i.e. non-Indigenous) culture’s preoccupation with a ‘once were warriors’ approach to the teaching of Māori history was having a negative impact on the ‘psychological wellbeing’ of young Māori; particularly those living in urban settings, often far away from their ancestral lands:

*What is largely offered to Māori students through the primary and post-primary education system is a powerfully reconstructed version of history utterly deprived of the vigorous truth of colonial and subsequent Māori, Pākehā and Crown interactions ... Deprivation of powerful role models and replacement with unrealistic song, dance and warrior/sport or assimilationist imagery have left many young Māori with few identity choices. It is scarce wonder that many have selected role models which relate to brown resistance movements such as Rastafarianism or other collective brown identities of their own creation. The forensic admission and re-admission of young Māori men to psychiatric hospitals attest to the severe ego destruction undergone by young colonised Māori. (Ramsden, 1994, pp. 20-21)*

Ramsden’s observations (above) were supported by all the Te Ātiawa participants in Manning’s (2008) doctoral study. They expressed their long-standing concerns about a generic New Zealand history curriculum perpetuating views of a homogeneous ‘Māoridom’. For example, one Te Ātiawa participant objected that:

*The generic ‘New Zealand’ history content, today, just continues to reinforce the racial prejudices of the past and stereotyping. That means that students [of history] don’t have to interact with local whānau [families] and hapū [subtribes] to the degree where they would be able to better understand ‘Māori’ things. I mean, let’s face it they [non-Māori students and teachers of history] wouldn’t have any understanding of what these local places mean to local Māori. (Manning, 2008, p. 129)*

The Te Ātiawa people interviewed by Manning (2008) agreed that all students, living in the cities of the Port Nicholson Block area (i.e. Wellington & Hutt City); should learn about their local Te Ātiawa histories of place – but only if mandated Te Ātiawa people are adequately resourced to have oversight of what is taught ‘about’ their relatives. This negotiated curriculum approach, they argued, would ensure that curriculum content ‘about’ them is taught ‘with’ them – for the sake of accuracy. To provide a rationale for why these perspectives (above) were held, the following introductory ‘tale from the field’ draws upon a memorable experience in the field of teacher education that prompted Manning’s doctoral research (Manning, 2008).

### **An Introductory ‘Tale from the Field’ to Exemplify the Problem**

This introductory ‘tale’ revolves around implications of a preservice teacher’s delivery of a social studies lesson I had observed as a visiting (Teacher Education) lecturer in 2002. This lesson sought to explain ‘how’ and ‘why’ the Te Ātiawa prophets Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kākahi led the Parihaka community’s passive resistance against the settler government’s confiscation of ancestral lands (Keenan, 2015). The lesson I observed was a cathartic experience for me. It motivated me to engage with Te Ātiawa friends and former teacher colleagues to develop a doctoral research project exploring the status of Te Ātiawa histories of place in Port Nicholson Block secondary schools and to consider the potential application of place-based education models (Manning, 2008). Prior to the lesson, the preservice teacher advised me she felt she had only been asked to deliver a ‘unit’ of lessons about the Treaty of Waitangi because she was ‘a Māori’. She also claimed her senior (Pākehā) colleagues felt ‘uncomfortable’ with teaching ‘Māori’ content (Manning, 2008). When discussing the lesson during the debrief meeting, the senior (associate) teacher confirmed that she had indeed assumed that the pre-service teacher would know much about Tohu Kākahi and Te Whiti o Rongomai. She was unaware that the preservice teacher only had whakapapa (genealogical) ties to a tribe in a Northern region of the North Island and that the preservice teacher was not familiar with the local area.

The concerns of the pre-service teacher forced me to recall my own formative experiences as a compliant young teacher of history and social studies. I too, had adhered to the prescribed text-book driven unit plans – produced by senior colleagues. Due to the power imbalances I experienced as a preservice teacher, I also found it difficult to query the pedagogical and political assumptions of confident senior colleagues. My senior colleagues inevitably held the power to determine whether I would become a registered teacher or not. So, I could, to some degree, empathize with this preservice teachers’ concerns. But, there were multiple difficulties experienced by this preservice teacher (a young Māori woman) that I had not encountered at the outset of my teaching career. For example, my senior colleagues never expected me to know all about the complexities of various European history simply due to my Irish and Dutch descent! It was not just the complexities of this colonial power-imbalance between a (Māori) preservice teacher and her senior (Pākehā) colleague that concerned me. What also troubled me was the realization that both teachers had become conditioned to have so much faith in the trustworthiness of textbooks. After the lesson, I asked them whether they might, in future, consider engaging with their local iwi (tribe) to seek support with the delivery of this particular lesson (Manning, 2008). While they both conceded that they could not name members of the local tribe to make such an approach, they still felt confident that the school’s newly purchased textbooks provided all the information required (Manning, 2008). They did not realise that various hapū (subtribe/s) of the Te Ātiawa iwi (tribe), had earlier migrated into the Heretaunga valley – encompassing their school grounds.

This valley is located in the wider area traditionally named, Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui/The head of the Fish of Maui (Southern-most area of New Zealand’s North Island). These migrations occurred in the early nineteenth century, initially in response to the ‘musket wars’ that were partially fuelled by commercial interactions with traders based in Sydney. This area was renamed the ‘Port Nicholson Block’. Today, it encompasses New Zealand’s capital city, Wellington – located on the inner South-western shores and surrounds of Te Whanganui a Tara (the great harbour of Tara/Wellington Harbour). The city spreads over the surrounding valleys and hills down to the South-western-most corner of the North Island’s coastline



**Figure 1. Map of areas within the Port Nicholson Block (Waitangi Tribunal, 2003: p. 15). Courtesy of Max Oulton (Cartographer), Waitangi Tribunal, Wellington; New Zealand Ministry of Justice.**

The problematic lesson began with the pre-service teacher diligently following the official lesson plan as instructed by her (senior) associate teacher. She gradually directed the students through a lustrous textbook – whilst, one-by-one, students were nominated to read successive paragraphs aloud. At the conclusion of each paragraph, the young teacher asked questions to diagnose whether the class had understood key historical concepts and events central to each paragraph. She then set the class some note-making tasks as set-out at the end of that textbook chapter. Meanwhile, I began wandering about the classroom curious to know whether students felt any ‘connection’ between their lived experiences and the lives of the historical figures concerned. They each replied, ‘no’ and some appeared dumbfounded by the logic of my question. This troubled me because I knew that many of the school’s students regularly played team sports at ‘Te Whiti Park’, just opposite a local whareni (meeting house) affiliated to Te Ātiawa and other people originating from Taranaki (Taranaki whanui). The name of this particular meeting house is: Te Arohanui ki te Tangata (‘goodwill to all mankind’).

This name bares testimony to the ongoing philosophy of passive resistance initially exhorted by the Te Ātiawa prophets who had gathered people from Taranaki tribes (i.e. Taranaki whanui) at Parihaka – to protect their ancestral Taranaki landscapes from the Crown’s land confiscation policies during the 1870s-1880s (Keenan, 2015). Moreover, some of the so-called ‘Māori’ students in that school were the descendants of the two ancestral figures central to that lesson. Therefore, this lesson was inevitably ‘about’ them, but was taught ‘without’ input from them or their families. These students were consequently left voiceless during the lesson due to a text-book driven approach to the teaching of history that has all-too-often alienated people (Apple 1993; Harrison, 2013, 2016; Manning 2008; 2017a). On the other hand, non-Māori students in that class were prevented from drawing connections between themselves and the name of a well-known local sports park, the name of a local whareni and how these were all connected to the genealogy of some of their friends.

When I was later invited to speak to the class near the end of that lesson, I drew attention to the connections that did exist between themselves and Te Whiti Park, the neighboring wharenuī and some of their (Te Ātiawa) school friends. The students suddenly became animated and told me they could now ‘see’ and ‘feel’ tangible links between themselves, their local suburban landscape and the ancestral figures central to that lesson. But the lesson soon ended, and students went off to their next class, leaving many questions unanswered. I later learned that the issues I encountered during that lesson mirrored problems found by researchers in Australia (Manning, 2008, 2017a). For example, Clark (2008) also observed that many Australian teachers also felt uncomfortable dealing with Indigenous subject matter. They, like many of their New Zealand colleagues (Manning, 2008, 2017a), struggled to motivate students to engage with Indigenous histories taught via textbook-driven lessons. Most students interviewed by Clark (2008) criticized a lack of depth and variation in pedagogy and were often unable to see the relevance between the passive learning of textbook-driven lessons to their own lived experiences and senses associated with being ‘in place’. Hence, the teaching of history, particularly the teaching of Indigenous peoples’ histories, involves complex forms of precarious learning. These complexities are often overlooked by teachers of history – who are often preoccupied with struggling to adhere to officially specified time constraints imposed by rigid curriculum guidelines (Manning, 2008).

### **Two ‘tales from the field’ to Illustrate the Perceived Benefits of Affective Pedagogies of Place**

The following Australian and New Zealand auto-ethnographic accounts outline approaches to teaching history ‘in place’ that often utilise prominent local waterways in Sydney (Australia) and Wellington (New Zealand) – to stimulate the affective and emotional senses of teachers and students, alike. The first of these ‘tales’ draws upon recollections of a project conducted by Harrison, Page and Tobin (2016), where 90 preservice teachers and Darug artists worked together to create three murals on campus. At the conclusion of the painting, students and artists were interviewed to reflect on process and outcomes. Interviews were transcribed and analysed manually (see below). The second (New Zealand) ‘tale from the field’ draws upon the doctoral research experiences of Manning (2008) which involved a series of interviews with nine prominent figures from the Te Ātiawa iwi and nine Heads of Department (history and Social studies) from Port Nicholson Block Secondary Schools. However, it is the insights of the nine Te Ātiawa interviewees that will provide the focus of the discussion because it is their perspectives that are most helpful when attempting to assist teacher educators to comprehend the nature of the problem that is central to this article.

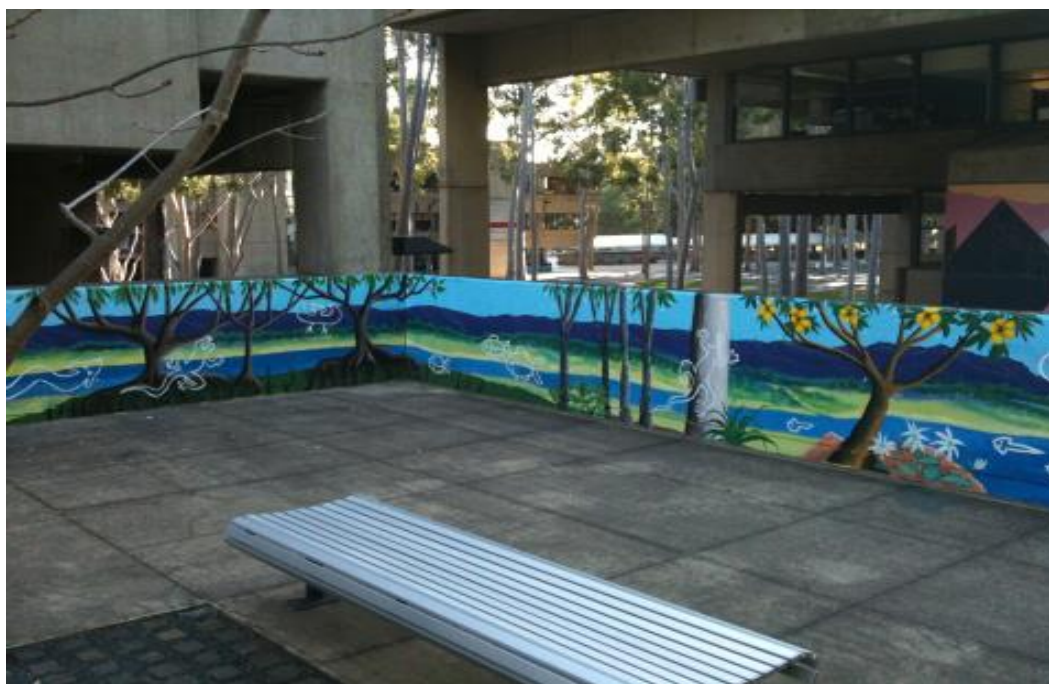
#### **An Australian ‘Tale from the Field’**

The Parramatta River flows through the centre of the Sydney basin, from the city of Parramatta into Port Jackson. It has been occupied for thousands of years by clans of the Darug, one of the main language groups of the Sydney region. The name of Parramatta has been named after a Darug word for eel, *Barramatta*, but that history has been written over many times by the English translation, to the extent where few Sydney inhabitants would know that the name is a Darug derivative. Macquarie University is located near the Parramatta River and many of its students live in the region. But few students know its Indigenous history, or the clans that have lived along the river, nor the importance of eels to the stories and lives of many Darug people living in the region.

Rather than talking about these stories in a classroom that seemed divorced from the places of history, a project was developed that would take students outside to work directly with Darug custodians. Our key aim was to locate and teach local Darug (Aboriginal) histories and cultures in local community, and to emphasise that history has a place (Harrison, 2013). We were in Sydney, Australia learning on Darug land. Our objective was to work with local Darug artists to demonstrate in concrete ways how local history could be presented as engaging and relevant to the lives of pre-service teachers, who were enrolled in both secondary and primary teacher education programs.

As students worked with three Darug artists, they were learning the special stories of the land along the Parramatta River. The theorising of human relationships and reconciliation that occurs in most classrooms was replaced by the direct experience of university students and Darug artists working alongside one another to create the three murals (Harrison, Page, and Tobin, 2016). Whilst promoting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is identified as a priority of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL, 2011), it continues to be talked about and examined from the remote place of the classroom. These discussions are estranged from the everyday relationships as they develop and evolve in communities around the school.

This project aimed to bring the preservice teachers and Darug artists together in a working relationship that might produce a sense of something more affective and enduring. Students listened to stories from Chris Tobin about the land upon which the university is located, the land of the Wallumedjgal, the Snapper fish people, a clan of the Darug of the Sydney basin. They listened to stories about the various clans and their totems that live on the Parramatta River (see Figure below). They heard about how these clans worked together over thousands of years to maintain a harmonious ecological system along the River. They listened to both Leanne and Chris tell the story about the annual migration of the eels, from the upper reaches of the Parramatta, down to the heads of Sydney harbour, and then north to the Coral Sea.



**Figure 2: Mural showing the Parramatta River and the annual migration of eels**

The mural itself shows the meeting of fresh and saltwater along the Parramatta River, while the flora and fauna represent the totems of various clans living along the length of the



river from the heads of Port Jackson in the morning to the upper reaches of the river at night. The shark and stingray represented at the entrance to the harbour are of special significance to the creation of the landscape of the region.

Long ago, the shark and stingray engaged in extended battle and as they did so, they gouged out the bays and inlets of Port Jackson (pers comm. Chris Tobin, 2014). In working outside, students and artists were affected by the changing light, and the emerging darkness, by the evening cool on their skin. Their eyes, their nose, and their skin were affected by the place in which they were working; their space was no longer moderated and conditioned by machines. Meanwhile, they were responsive to the many people who were passing by and stopped to inquire about the project. There was clearly an unintended sense of public education at work here. And on a personal level, their own affective experiences with wind and light, with dust and cold left them vulnerable to the everyday senses of the land around them (Harrison, Page, and Tobin, 2016).

Learning was less certain, more precarious when it was taking place outside. There was an unintended public audience who had their own questions to ask, the process was not clear; it was new and the outcomes were evolving with the painting of the murals. Students were engaged by the affectivity of land and all it has to offer in terms of the seasons, the wind, the light and the personal affectations. Students were not just learning about a history of Aboriginal Sydney, nor were they sitting in classrooms reading placeless history books. These preservice teachers were learning that history always comes from a place – and should always be connected to that place, and taught in that place.

Local history is important if we are to avoid perpetuating a conception of history among students as knowledge that is disembodied and placeless (Rey & Harrison, 2018; Bartleet, Bennett, Marsh, Power & Sunderland, 2014). The ‘forces of nature’ did engage students. Preservice teachers later remarked that they felt like a little bit of themselves was ‘left in place’, that a semblance of self would continue to inhabit Macquarie University after they graduated. They were learning that the Parramatta River is a Darug place, and that the site has an ongoing history that is often written-over by the dominant colonial discourses of the city (Harrison, 2013). History books can tell us about the history of working towards reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, but they rarely have the capacity to explain to a student how a healthy cross-cultural relationship might work. Students took away from this project an approach to working with Aboriginal people, which exceeded any possible learning from history books (see Harrison, Page and Tobin, 2016).

They were learning to feel comfortable in how they individually related to these three Aboriginal artists. And through the project, they were returning to a place with a sense of reciprocity and humility. Our work with the murals was driven by narratives of place, rather than a didactic approach to teaching. Taking a didactic approach to teaching history is likely to turn students away from learning. They often know when they are being taught a political lesson (Ellsworth, 2005; Todd, 2003). However, narratives of the Parramatta River – as a place of flora and fauna (including people) appeared far more palatable to these pre-service teachers because the artists were not perceived to be pushing a political agenda. There was no attempt to correct the students’ thinking or to teach them the ‘right way’. These preservice teachers were hearing and observing stories connected to a place and history. They were presented with a context for their learning – and place for their history. Yet, students learning from textbooks are left to theorize the significance of these places insofar as the places remain in their imagination, and separated from their lived experiences.

## A New Zealand ‘Tale from the Field’

This ‘tale’ draws solely upon the author’s recollections of significant responses of the nine Te Ātiawa interviewees who participated in Manning’s doctoral research (Manning, 2008). One of the key findings of this research was that each of the Te Ātiawa interviewees identified affective place/land-based pedagogies as their preferred ways of sharing their own tribal histories with local teachers and students of history. Moreover, they proposed pedagogical approaches which challenged the prevailing ‘traditional’ (Western) approaches to history teaching and powerfully affirmed Smith’s (1999) proposition that:

*Coming to know the past has been part of the critical pedagogy of decolonization. To hold alternative histories is to hold alternative knowledges. The pedagogical implication of this access to alternative knowledges is that they can form the basis for alternative ways of doing things. Transforming our colonized views of our own history ... requires us to revisit, site by site, our history under Western eyes. This in turn requires a theory or approach which helps us to engage with, understand and then act upon history (pp. 34-35).*

The Te Ātiawa interviewees repeatedly explained that the local natural environs and cultural landmarks of the Port Nicholson Block area should be used to support the teaching of local Te Ātiawa histories and New Zealand history in general. They each proposed to me, in differing ways, that the teaching of New Zealand history should involve a ‘holistic’ pedagogy that utilizes local landscapes, waterways, flora and fauna to stimulate a range of senses (i.e. audio, visual, smell, touch, taste). They reasoned that this would give students ‘meaningful’ (i.e. affective) learning experiences to counter-balance the supposedly ‘objective’ textbook-driven lessons they had each bemoaned when discussing their own schooling experiences (Manning, 2009). Therefore, it quickly became evident that the Te Ātiawa interviewees held a shared belief that it is vital for all New Zealand teachers and students of history to learn to develop ecological literacy skills, outside their classrooms.

This, they explained, would enable them to draw fully upon their senses to critically and emotionally draw links between people and land, sea, flora and fauna through time – so as to have their various senses of feeling in place – ‘come alive’. This shared stance, in some respects, reminded me of Freire and Macedo’s (1987) view that teachers need to learn to support students to ‘read’ the ‘word’ and the ‘world.’ The Te Ātiawa interviewees’ propositions also aligned with the work of Russell (1997), who urged historians to read natural landscapes in order to better understand how human history may have impacted contemporary ecosystems and landscapes.

Russell suggested that the ability to ‘read landscapes’ would, in turn, help historians to recognise how changing environments may have influenced human history. This alignment with Russell’s (1997) analyses was most evident when one Te Ātiawa interviewee stated:

*You can’t divorce history from other subjects or from the natural environment. That’s one of the big problems with the teaching of history. History teachers are still saying things like, “this event happened in 1887, that event happened in 1900, that event happened in 1977”. It is too simplistic because you can’t divorce those events from the natural environment that they took place in. For instance if I’m talking about the history of this place, I will talk about the Waiwhetū [Starry Waters] Stream [Heretaunga] and how we’ve lived here for a long time and how important that stream is to us because it represents the mauri [life force] of water and how essential that is to being [i.e. ‘feeling’] alive. I’ll talk about the history of things that happened around that stream over the time that we have been here and explain why that’s important to us and why it’s*

*important for the future: because the stream's being contaminated. So, you shouldn't exclude from history those other aspects of living, like science, maths or spiritual things (Manning, 2008, p. 125).*

The Te Ātiawa interviewees emphasised that teachers of history and their students also need to acquire knowledge of Te Reo Māori (the Māori language) to 'feel' the audible and visible historical information to be found in the Indigenous place names surrounding them. For example, one of the Te Ātiawa interviewees (Manning, 2008, pp. 191-192) used the analogy of employing a Global Information System (GIS) digital cultural mapping exercise to explain why she felt teachers 'should' learn Te Reo Māori:

*A sound knowledge of Te Reo Māori does give you another insight into something much deeper, something that happened, here, in this place, or that this other particular place was named after someone or something that had happened and that you may be in peril by being in that place [i.e. a dangerous local waterway].*

Her analogy underlined the fact that all of the Te Ātiawa interviewees were alert to the pedagogical opportunities provided by GPS/GIS technologies, but only 'if' they are applied to the teaching of history in a manner that involves Te Ātiawa people as 'equal partners' in a negotiated curriculum. For example, one Te Ātiawa interviewee suggested that, with guidance from Te Ātiawa custodians of tribal knowledge, teachers and students of history could use these technologies to help them to 'feel' and 'read' the changing land and seascapes surrounding them. He next proposed that it would be appealing for him to see students and teachers using GPS/GIS technologies to help research the various tribal migrations from Taranaki to Wellington in the 1820s. He reasoned that GPS/GIS technologies would be valuable tools for students and teachers to use to record the paths that his tūpuna [ancestors] took along the land and through the coastal areas. He felt it would be wonderful if teachers and students could work with the tribe to record the key landmarks that his ancestors would have encountered when migrating from Taranaki – such as the mountains, hills and so forth.

This would help students and teachers to develop an appreciation for the 'physical and spiritual endurance of his tūpuna' – who had to detect different natural resources in order to pass through the different landscapes (Manning, 2008, pp. 191-192). Whenever the Te Ātiawa interviewees were asked 'how' they would like to teach local history students about their Te Ātiawa histories of place, they consistently favoured active, multi-sensory learning experiences, such as 'walking the cultural landscape' which required students to be 'in place'. This was most evident when one interviewee, below, explained how a small group of Te Ātiawa elders and historians had recently taken Wellington City Councillors along the different reaches of the Waitangi (weeping waters) Stream, located in central Wellington City (the Capital of New Zealand) to explain how the history of that polluted stream was related to the proposed naming of Waitangi Park. He said:

*Consider why it's called "Waitangi Park." In doing that redevelopment [e.g. the 'day-lighting' of the lower reaches of the Waitangi stream] and naming it "Waitangi Park" the history of human occupation of that area suddenly comes alive! That was an māhinga kai, a place to gather crops. People [City Councillors] were also quite surprised to find that though there's no stream, because it's all in an underground pipe now, there's still a large quantity of eels living in the Waitangi stream. They hadn't learned the history of that stream [at school] or that that stream's now in a pipe.*

*But, despite that pipe and other pipes, the eels still migrate up and down the pipes below the city. They travel up into the Newtown area of the city and heaven knows how they survive, but they do survive in that subterranean stream*

*... I think that when those people understood those elements of that place's history you could just see it was one of those "ohhhhhh" moments for them. They said things like: "I'd never even thought about the potential of looking at historical things that way before". It's kind of like "out of sight, out of mind" and, as a result, it's also a bit like how Māori culture is now. It's just like the stream that's piped underground so that we never have to think of it again! (Manning, 2008, pp. 191-192)*



**Figure 3: Photo of public health warning sign warning public about the water quality of the Waitangi Stream, Central Wellington, New Zealand (Manning collection).**

Having shared our respective ‘tales’ from Sydney (Australia) and Wellington (New Zealand), the following passage provides a trans-Tasman analysis of the recurring themes we see emerging from them.

### **Recurring Themes: Saving History from the Textbook**

In the passage that follows, we have taken the position that history needs to be ‘saved from the textbook’. Also that it is vital for teachers of history to appreciate that place/land-based pedagogies are more than just a rural phenomenon. Such pedagogies can occur in urban environs to enable urban students of history to also have a deeper sense of belonging to a place. This, in turn, suggests, to us, that history involves affective learning and is more than just a cognitive exercise. All of this holds great relevance to those teaching ‘about’ Indigenous histories (i.e. rather than teaching ‘with’ Indigenous peoples). The teaching of history in Australian and New Zealand schools is ‘boring’ for many students (Clarke 2008; Manning, 2008, 2017a) because the ‘knowledge’ (regarding the history concerned, or the teacher’s interpretation of it) is separated from the place that constitutes its significance. The meaning then comes from the historian – or the author writing the textbook. As a result,

students in schools are expected to compete with the author to interpret the knowledge (story) in their way, an impossible task for many, and especially for those from cultural and social backgrounds different to the author and/or those described in the story. History, indeed, becomes more imagination than reality in the classroom, when the story is a mere artefact of the individual's (i.e. author and/or teacher's) mind. But despite Scott's (1991) proclamation, which was supported by Vellerman (2003) and Gilbert (2011) more recently; that narratives should not have a significant place in the study of history – history becomes more than an individual's experience. Especially when students are able to see themselves in the web of relationships that inevitably structure the elements (flora and fauna) of place. Students learn to belong within these ecological sets of place-relations. But we can no longer cling to the assumption that the arrival of Captain Cook, or the first fleet in Australia or the World Wars are the most useful things to teach in Australian schools. These people and events belong to another place and time for most students in Australian schools.

Likewise, we cannot accept the similar preoccupation that many New Zealand history teachers have with the origins and outcomes of both World Wars (Hunter, 1999; Manning, 2008, 2017b). This trend reflects a dominant settler culture's nation-building narrative that is not too dissimilar to that found in Australian schools and public places. This one-dimensional view of New Zealand history ignores those battles fought amongst New Zealanders on New Zealand soil both before and after the Treaty of Waitangi (1840). While many people gather solemnly on Anzac Day to commemorate loved ones who died on foreign soil, New Zealand teachers of history should be equally mindful of those thousands of 'New Zealanders' (primarily Māori) who died during the 'musket wars' era of the early Nineteenth Century (Ballara, 2003). As Belich (1996) noted:

*The musket wars were the largest conflict ever fought on New Zealand soil. They killed more New Zealanders than World War One—perhaps about 20,000. They involved most tribes and caused substantial social and economic dislocation.*  
(p. 157)

They should also be mindful of the prevailing historical myopia which prompted students from Ōtorohanga College to present a petition to the New Zealand parliament in March 2016 (Price, 2016; Manning 2017b). It was signed by 13,000 people and called upon the New Zealand government to make the New Zealand Land Wars (1845-1872) a mandatory topic in the New Zealand Curriculum. While remaining supportive of the intent of this petition, we feel that consideration also needs to be given to the fact that many history teachers' have a preoccupation with conflict narratives and that this sort of obsession may limit the scope of history teaching in both countries; particularly when Indigenous leaders and communities themselves prefer to 'reclaim' their narratives of the past:

*As the great Māori health leader, Dr Irihapeti Ramsden, once stated with both concern and pride, Māori have always been more than just warriors: "once were gardeners, once were astronomers, once were philosophers, once were lovers". (Gray, 2017, p.1)*

We suspect a 'once were gardeners' focus, as advocated by Ramsden (above), might indeed encourage New Zealand and Australian teachers of history to focus on local environmental histories of place and to engage in authentic, experiential learning activities which enable them and their students to explore a broader range of historical figures, events and themes. These may likely involve issues that are of greater concern to local Indigenous communities – who strive to maintain customary relationships with their local land and seascapes; plus flora and fauna. Therefore, this article also indicates that similar challenges face urban Indigenous communities on both sides of the Tasman Sea.

## Conclusion

Knowing one's history matters, particularly in terms of helping to connect young people cognitively *and* emotionally to the places they inhabit. However, emotional connections to place are usually undervalued by a curriculum that relies heavily on the study of textbook-history as the primary means for explaining "how people, events, and forces from the past have shaped our world" (NSW Education Standards Authority, 2012). The Australian history curriculum requires students to think their way through historical issues and problems (NSW Education Standards Authority, 2012, p. 13). The focus has, consequently, been on cognitive learning. A similar emphasis on inquiry-based learning underpins the current New Zealand history curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2010) which, amongst other things, also emphasizes that, "authentic understanding in history comes from developing a grasp of the key concepts and underlying key historical events, themes, and issues" (Ministry of Education, 2010, p.5).

We have, consequently, called for a more affective (and decolonising) approach to the teaching of Indigenous histories in both countries. One that simultaneously challenges and stretches the traditional boundaries of the Western discipline of history – by advocating for the inclusion of multi-sensory learning experiences that provide a contrast to traditional Western cognitive learning exercises (Harrison, 2013; Manning, 2008; Clarke, 2008; Ellsworth, 2005). To this end, we have advocated for the adoption of Indigenous place/land-based pedagogies in pre/in-service teacher education programs to enable future teachers of history to experience getting 'out' of the classroom, and 'into a place' where Indigenous histories are performed, reverberate and are entangled within the genealogical webs of the inter-related flora and fauna of that land/seascape.

We recommend that pre-service teachers be provided with ample opportunities to learn to both 'feel' and 'think' about the past – whilst being 'in place' alongside Indigenous custodians of place/historical knowledge – people who have a mandate from their own communities to determine 'what' is taught about them and 'where' and 'how' that learning should occur. It has been our experience that Indigenous place/land based pedagogies allow for students and teachers, alike, to better understand their local seasonal cycles of life – which often remain overlooked by linear, grand-narrative accounts of the past traditionally privileged by many exponents of the Western discipline of history. These (social) 'scientific' accounts of the past often focus on anthropocentric events, themes and issues. They occur in ethnocentric ways of 'being' and 'knowing' that allow the full complexities of local Indigenous histories and colonial power struggles to often be hidden from sight, sound, smell, touch and taste (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Penetito, 2004; Manning, 2008; Somerville & Perkins, 2011; Hokari, 2011; Harrison, 2013).

Hence, we have emphasised that Indigenous histories are multi-sensory and always come from a place, and can only really begin to be understood by teachers and students of history in the context of their 'local' Indigenous places and sites of cultural significance. It is in these places where local flora, fauna and land/seascapes provide vital mnemonic prompts, and natural pedagogical props which are essential to 'feeling' and 'thinking' about history in ways that are most likely to be deemed by Indigenous peoples, themselves, as being, 'culturally-responsive'.



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