

# **SOCIAL ECOLOGY: APPLYING ECOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDINGS TO OUR LIVES AND OUR PLANET**

**Edited by David Wright, Catherine E. Camden-Pratt and Stuart B. Hill - 2011**

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## **Contributors**

**Roslyn Arnold** is an Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Sydney. She was Dean of Education at the University of Tasmania and Pro-Dean and Head of School at the University of Sydney. Her research interests are writing development, arts education, teacher education, leadership development and empathic intelligence – a theory of teaching and learning that she has developed to explain the qualities of exceptional educators. She has delivered keynote addresses on her research interests in Australia, the United States, England, Canada and Singapore. Her books include *Writing Development: Magic in the Brain* (Open University 1992) and *Empathic Intelligence: Teaching, Learning, Relating* (UNSW Press 2005).

**Jasmin Ball** was raised in Melbourne, Australia. She fell in love with nature at a young age and has always experienced a strong sense of connection to special childhood places. At the age of six she adopted a rock and kept it as a pet, much to the chagrin of her parents! It was this desire for relationship, place-connection, magic and fun that has motivated her to harness diverse and often unexpected opportunities to experience life at its fullest. Jasmin has over ten years experience teaching sustainable living and change in schools, universities, outdoor settings and corporations. With a background in teaching and a master's in social ecology, Jasmin has also lectured and tutored in Education for Sustainability for the University of Western Sydney.

**Richard Bawden** is adjunct professor at Michigan State University, a visiting professor at the Open University in the UK, a Fellow and Director of the Systemic Development Institute (SDI), and a Professor Emeritus at the University of Western Sydney. He has recently retired (August 2007) as a Visiting Distinguished University Professor at Michigan State University; prior to that he spent 20 years at Hawkesbury Agricultural College, later the University of Western Sydney.

For most of that time he was Dean of Agriculture and Rural Development and Professor of Systemic Development. Upon his retirement from that university he was awarded Professor Emeritus status. He has been a Visiting Scholar/Professor and a consultant to systemic development projects in more than two dozen countries across five continents. He has published more than 200 journal articles, book chapters, and keynote conference papers. He is a member of the editorial boards of three international journals.

**Barry Bignell** studied music at the Royal Military School of Music (UK). He studied conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, and was awarded the Director's Prize for conducting. Barry was subsequently Director of the Australian Army Band, Melbourne. Barry also studied with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the Deutsche Oper, and subsequently pursued a career as a conductor for orchestras, choirs and wind bands. He has had a parallel career in education and was Head of Postgraduate Studies in music at the Victorian College of the Arts and Music, University of Melbourne. He has lectured widely on musicality and its social and psycho-spiritual implications. He is currently preparing a book on that topic. Barry has a master's degree in education from the University of Melbourne and a PhD in social ecology from the University of Western Sydney.

**Carol Birrell** is an artist, writer and academic exploring the interaction between an indigenous and Western sense of place. Her 2007 PhD thesis is titled *Meeting Country: Deep Engagement with Place and Indigenous Culture*. She is currently teaching social ecology at the University of Western Sydney and Aboriginal education at the University of Wollongong. She has been working with a land-based arts practice for the last 12 years called 'ecopoiesis', which draws together movement, painting, photography, environmental sculpture and poetry as a base for ecological narratives and exploring our ecological identity. Carol has strong long-term connections with Yuin (south coast NSW) and Worrorra (west Kimberley) indigenous communities.

**John Broomfield** was born in New Zealand. He did his doctorate at the Australian National University. His distinguished academic career includes fellowships at MIT, the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies and the ANU; and service as Professor of Asian and Comparative History at the University of Michigan, and as President of the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco. He brings a wealth of experience in cultures around the world, including study with Native American, Tibetan Buddhist, Hindu, Balinese, Maori and Aboriginal Australian teachers. His most recent book is *Other Ways of Knowing: Recharting Our Future with Ageless Wisdom* (Inner Traditions 1997).

**Catherine E. Camden-Pratt** lectures in social ecology in the School of Education at the University of Western Sydney. Her 2003 PhD was published in 2006 as *Out of the Shadows: Daughters Growing up with a 'Mad' Mother* (Finch Publishing). She

has published across creative arts, social ecology, research and pedagogy. Her most recent academic publications include chapters in *Pedagogical Encounters* (Peter Lang Publishing 2009). Catherine has exhibited her artwork, opened local art exhibitions, presented on social ecology and art making, and written and performed in plays based on research data. In 2010 Catherine received a national university teacher's award for teaching: The Australian Learning and Teaching Council's Citation for Teaching Excellence. This award was on the basis of her teaching which 'foregrounds critical creativity and establishes safe spaces for experimentation, using creative learning approaches which transform students' understanding of themselves as agents of change' (ALTC 2010).

**John Cameron** worked as a geologist and green economist before spending fifteen years as a Senior Lecturer in Social Ecology at the University of Western Sydney, teaching courses on Sense of Place and coordinating the research programs. In 2005 he and his partner Vicki King moved to Bruny Island in Tasmania, where they have undertaken a land regeneration project on their fifty- five acres at 'Blackstone'. He is an Honorary Associate of the School of Philosophy at the University of Tasmania and he co-founded the Bruny Island Environment Network. John was editor of the book *Changing Places: Re-Imagining Australia* (Longueville 2003), which included contributions by 25 of Australia's leading sense-of-place researchers. His recent essays on his experiences at 'Blackstone' have been published in *Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology*.

**Bruce Graham Fell** is a social ecologist, academic and author. He lives in a rural valley before the junction of two creeks boarded by farmland and re-growth forest in Central Western New South Wales. Bruce writes about rakali swimming, wallaby weaving and people trapped by the World Problematique. Bruce has written and directed film, television, video and online productions. He's the author of *Television & Climate Change: The Season Finale* ([www.brucefell.com](http://www.brucefell.com)). Bruce's education and community interests are directed towards questions concerning ecology, media and wellbeing. Dr Fell lectures in visual literacy scriptwriting and movie production at Charles Sturt University, Australia.

**Graeme Frauenfelder** is a graduate of social ecology at the University of Western Sydney where he uses experiential learning practices to teach creativity, transformation, diversity and wellbeing. His involvement with projects in Asia, Africa and the South Pacific focuses on enhancing the wellbeing and quality of life of individuals, communities and organizations by using creativity, cultural enrichment and transformative kindness. His university research in social ecology included working with Zambian professionals to empower youth, community leaders and teachers in their villages. Favourite pursuits include being an inspirational speaker and entertaining storyteller, and a playful clown at community festivals.

**Susanne Gannon** is passionate about writing in and out of academia. She lives in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, Australia, and is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of Western Sydney. Susanne was a high school teacher prior to taking up an academic position. She is a co-author of *Place, Pedagogy, Change* (Sense Publishers 2011), *Deleuze and Collaborative Writing* (Peter Lang 2011), *Pedagogical Encounters* (Peter Lang 2009), *Charged with Meaning: Reviewing English* (Wakefield Press 2009) and *Doing Collective Biography* (Open University Press/ McGraw Hill 2006); and has contributed sole and co-authored chapters to the *Sage Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis* (Sage 2007 and 2011), *Theory and Methods in Social Research* (Sage 2005, 2011), *Writing Qualitative Research on Practice* (Sense Publishers 2009) and *Poetic Inquiry: Vibrant Voices in the Social Sciences* (Sense Publishers 2009).

**Robin Grille** is a father, psychologist in private practice and a parenting educator. His articles on parenting and child development have been widely published and translated in Australia and overseas. Robin's first book, *Parenting for a Peaceful World* (Longueville Media 2005), has received international acclaim and led to speaking engagements around Australia, USA and New Zealand. His second book, *Heart to Heart Parenting* (2008), is published by ABC Books. Robin's work is animated by his belief that humanity's future is largely dependent on the way we collectively relate to our children. <http://www.our-emotional-health.com>

**Christy Hartlage** is a mother of two, an educator and a food lover. She has a strong belief in the ritual, celebratory power of food. Christy has pursued her interest in food, activism and cultural change through study in the USA, New Zealand and Australia. Whilst in New Zealand Christy grew herbal medicines and played a role in local and national environmental movements, most particularly the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Genetic Modification. Her current preoccupation with parenting has led her to an interest in constructing opportunities for supported care for mothers and new babies. Christy has written for a variety of popular and academic media, most recently a chapter in *Rituals Aotearoa* (in press).

**Stuart B. Hill** is Foundation Chair of Social Ecology at the University of Western Sydney (now retired). His PhD was one of the first whole ecosystem studies to examine community and energy relationships and he received awards for Best PhD Thesis and Best PhD Student. He has published over 350 papers and reports. His books include *Ecological Pioneers* (with Martin Mulligan; Cambridge 2001) and *Learning for Sustainable Living* (with Werner Sattmann-Frese; Lulu 2008). He has worked in development projects across the world. His work in the Seychelles to make a coralline island self-sufficient in food and energy is particularly significant. His background in chemical engineering, ecology, soil biology, entomology, agriculture, psychotherapy, education,

policy development and international development, and his experience of working with transformative change, has enabled him to be an effective facilitator in complex situations that demand collaboration across difference and a long-term co-evolutionary approach to situation improvement.

**Sally MacKinnon** has been involved in the environment and sustainability movements for over 20 years as an educator, communicator, storyteller and community volunteer. Sally contributed to the establishment of the Ethos Foundation in 2005, and her work focuses on program design and facilitation; research and writing; and participatory community engagement particularly in the areas of Local Living Economy, and community resilience and prosperity. Sally's first book, *Expanding Green Strategies: Creating Change Through Negotiation*, was published in late 2009, and in 2010 her poetry formed part of the group art exhibition 'My Black Heart' at the Scenic Rim Regional Gallery.

**Kathryn McCabe** is a senior facilitator and national program coordinator with OzGREEN. Kathryn works with businesses, schools, community groups and indigenous communities. She has lectured on sustainability education at the University of Western Sydney and presents at conferences on personal wellbeing, systems thinking and change. Kathryn applies a multidisciplinary approach of social ecology, science, applied physics, drama, therapy and education to her work for personal and cultural transformations.

**John (Jack) P. Miller** has been working in the field of holistic education for over 30 years. He is author/ editor of more than a dozen books on holistic learning and contemplative practices in education, which include *Education and the Soul* (State University of New York Press 2000), *The Holistic Curriculum* (OISE Press 1996) and *Educating for Wisdom and Compassion* (Corwin Press 2005). The *Holistic Curriculum* has provided the framework for the curriculum at the Whole Child School in Toronto. Jack has worked with holistic educators in Japan and Korea and has been visiting professor at two universities in Japan. He recently was one of twenty-four educators invited to Bhutan to help that country develop their educational system so that it supports the country's goal of Gross National Happiness. He teaches courses on holistic education and spirituality education for graduate students and students in Initial Teacher Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

**Martin Mulligan** is the Director of the Globalism Research Centre at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University in Melbourne where he specializes in strategies for the sustainability of local communities in the context of global change. From 1993 to 2003 he was a lecturer in the social ecology program at the University of Western Sydney where he taught subjects related to ecological thinking and environmental sociology. During this time he worked with Stuart Hill to produce the book *Ecological Pioneers: A Social History of Australian Ecological Thought and Action* (Cambridge 2001). He also worked with William Adams at Cambridge University to produce an edited volume called *Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era* (Earthscan 2003).

**Bernie Neville** is Adjunct Professor of Education at La Trobe University. He holds an MA in Classics from Adelaide and a PhD in Education from La Trobe. He has been involved in the pre-service and in-service education of teachers since 1972. He has researched and written on the interpersonal aspects of teaching and learning and the application of counselling theory to the process. His particular interests in the area of classroom processes are reflected in the title of his book: *Educating Psyche: Emotion, Imagination and the Unconscious in Learning* (HarperCollins 1989). He has consulted extensively with business and educational institutions on communication within organizations and strategies for organizational change. His particular interest in archetypal psychology as a framework for exploring and analysing organizational culture is reflected in the title of his book: *Olympus Inc.: Intervening for Cultural Change in Organizations* (Flat Chat Press, 2008).

**Thomas William Nielsen** is an assistant professor at the University of Canberra, Australia. A member of the National Values Education Project Advisory Committee, he has served in several of the Australian Government values education projects. He is program leader of the Imagination and Education Research Group, University of Canberra branch, and has received several teaching awards, including the 2008 Australian Learning and Teaching Council Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. Dr Nielsen advocates a 'Curriculum of Giving', his research showing that giving and service to others creates unparalleled wellbeing and resilience in students – something much needed in a Western world with rising depression and suicide rates.

**Edmund O'Sullivan** is a Professor of Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. He is Director of the Transformative Learning Centre that does both research and graduate programs on ecological issues that emphasizes a global-planetary vision combining ecological literacy, social justice and human rights concerns, diversity education that deals with issues of race, gender, class, sexual orientation and ableism. He is the author of eight books and has written over a hundred articles, chapters in books and refereed journals. His latest books are *Critical Psychology and Critical Pedagogy* (University of Toronto 1990) and *Transformative Learning: Building Educational Vision for the 21st Century* (Zed Books 1999).

**David Russell** is a psychologist and psychodynamic psychotherapist in private practice (East Sydney). He also holds the position of Associate Professor (Adjunct) in the School of Psychology at the University of Western Sydney. He joined The Hawkesbury Agricultural College as a lecture in organizational psychology in 1978 and taught in an adult education program, which, after a few years evolved into a set of programs in social ecology. In the year 2000, at what is now the University of Western Sydney, a group of interested faculty established a master's degree in Analytical Psychology (a course work program based on the works of Carl Jung and the post-Jungians). He is currently president of the Sydney Jung Society.

**John Seed** is founder of the Rainforest Information Centre. Since 1979 he has worked for the protection of rainforests worldwide for which he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 1995. He has created numerous projects protecting rainforests in South America, Asia and the Pacific through providing benign and sustainable development projects for their indigenous inhabitants tied to the protection of their forests. He has written and lectured extensively on deep ecology and co-authored *Thinking Like a Mountain: Towards a Council of All Beings* (New Society Publishers 1988). For over 25 years he has lectured on eco-philosophy and conducted experiential deep ecology workshops around the world.

**Ben-Zion Weiss** is a community educator in social ecology, meditation, yoga, drama, English for Speakers of Other Languages, cross-cultural conflict and non-violence training. He lectures and tutors at the University of Western Sydney, consults for the New South Wales Department of Education and Training Multicultural Programs in Cooling Conflicts and other intercultural programs. His PhD research is on anti-racism drama education and an ecology of culture. He presents at conferences; facilitates workshops for youth workers, teachers and community workers; leads Dances of Universal Peace; and facilitates dialogues in spiritual ecology. He has completed a draft of a book based on his thesis and has written chapters and papers for other publications.

**James Whelan** lives in Newcastle, New South Wales in the Worimi nation. His commitment to community action for social and environmental justice has drawn him to work in the community sector and in research and higher education. James has worked with non-government, community and environment groups. James has worked with several Australian universities. He was Theme Leader for the Coastal CRC's Citizen Science research program, has published on participatory democracy and social movements, and has spoken at international conferences. James' community and academic worlds merge in his work as director of the Change Agency, which provides education, training, facilitation and research support for social change groups in Australia and the Pacific.

**Peter Willis** is a Senior Lecturer in adult learning and education at the University of South Australia. He pioneered phenomenological approaches in arts-based research in his book *Inviting Learning: An Exhibition of Risk and Enrichment in Adult Education Practice* (NIACE 2002). His main research areas concern transformative, 'second chance' and 'resistant' learning among adults, the power of the imagination in learning, and relationships between religion, spirituality and civil society. Recent edited publications include *Pedagogies of the Imagination* (Springer 2008) (with Leonard), *Towards Re-Enchantment: Education, Imagination and the Getting of Wisdom* (Post Pressed 2005) (with Heywood, McCann and Neville) and *Wisdom, Spirituality and the Aesthetic* (Post Pressed 2009) (with Leonard, Hodge and Morrison).

**David Wright** is co-ordinator of Social Ecology programs at the University of Western Sydney. He is a past Head of Performance in the School of Contemporary Arts and Academic Advisor to the Department of Maori Performing Arts in Te Wananga o Aotearoa (New Zealand). David has a background in writing for performance. He has published work in a variety of styles, from creative fiction to eco-philosophy. This work has appeared in books and journals in the fields of literary fiction, applied drama, drama education, ecosophy, sense of place, eco-politics, reflective practice, imagination, cross-cultural arts practice, and higher education.

**Ainslie Yardley** is a researcher and associate member of Social Justice and Social Change Research at the University of Western Sydney. She is a novelist, theatre artist and multi-media essayist. Her work in community has included youth theatre productions and projects with refugee claimants from many areas of conflict throughout the world. She has worked with the Australian AIDS Memorial QUILT Project, the Bosnian Community Choir in Brisbane and on multimedia projects in the disability and mental health sectors. Ainslie has lectured in cultural ecology and production management. Her research practice and academic publications incorporate new methodologies and multidisciplinary approaches including embodied creativity and narrative theory.