

Schumacher College: Masters in Ecological Design Thinking

Ecological Learning through Direct Experience

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This video thesis is an attempt to bring a deeper understanding of Eco-literacy through Experiencing the natural world. The thesis is as much a quest to deepen my own self-knowledge (theory to practise), as it is an exploration of learning more about how people impacts place and place impacts people.

Contents

List of Figures	2
Prologue: The hunt	2
Introduction	3
Research Methodology	4
Ecological Design Thinking and the state of the Planet	5
An Introduction to ‘Experiential’ Tracking.....	7
Tracking the socio-cultural Field: providing a wider domain to the contribution of eco-literacy.....	8
Tracking the stories of our Past	10
Tracking the philosophy and mind-set of a local Tracker	11
Tracking Gaia and our place amongst the stars	12
Conclusion and Reflections	13
Epilogue: Encountering a Lion	15
References	16
<u>Appendices</u>	
Details of Documentary.....	19
Supervisors.....	20
Acknowledgment to WEB OF LIFE, that helped me get to where I am today.....	20
The movie Script.....	23
Resources gained as an outcome of ‘experiencing Brazil 2015’	24

PLEASE NOTE

This complementary write up, should be read prior to viewing the Documentary (Ecological Learning through Direct Experience). The write up is shorter than what a normal thesis is, and therefore acts as supplement for the viewer to understand where the theoretical literature was sourced from.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Planetary Boundaries, this picture helps to illustrate how we destroying our earth functions

Figure 2: This Diagram, is the design process I took to try and create the structure for my thesis

Figure 3: This picture was from when I was working with an organisation called VagaLume down the Amazon River. I was living in a community, reading local stories to the children

Figure: 4: These pictures are from when I was travelling down the Amazon River, and we were stopped by the federal police

Figure: 5 this picture was taken in the Cederberg Mountains, where I was teaching people about the stars

Figure 6: A beautiful sunset on the Amazonian Rainforest

Figure 7: Matheus, who helped me edit the film, and film when I couldn't hold the camera. Here he is standing with some of the local children from the Cederberg Mountains

Figure 8, 9 and 10: These are pictures of my own resources I used to gain the knowledge for the thesis. Figure 8 is the drawing book I used to script the Documentary (all references in Documentary are listed in references in this paper). Figure 9 is the final structure I got to, for the documentary. Finally figure 10 is the journal itself that brought many insights. This will be handed in with the printed copies of the paper.

Prologue: The hunt

After a long, hot day, the lion's stomach began to rumble deeply, it is time to hunt. He began stalking through the thick acacia bushes, constantly scent marking to show his dominance to the land. The new moon is out, shadowing the land in darkness. To the south he hears the all familiar sound of hyenas, and picking up on this trail, moves quickly through the savanna, tracking this haunting laughter. The noise escalates as he moves up one of the crests. Stealthily moving into a

clearing, he sees two hyenas cackling underneath an umbrella thorn tree. On the end of one of the branches, a leopard feeds on an impala ram. The lion doesn't enter this dynamic immediately; he intensely observes the interaction. From the other side of the tree another male lion enters the scene, it's his brother. The lion observing, immediately runs to his brother's side, and by the time they greet each other, the hyenas are long gone. The brothers then begin circling the tree around the leopard. Tension constricts the muscles of the young feline. It is one of his first encounters with lions. The two brothers then begin to try and climb the tree, and hook their claws on the dangling legs of the dead impala. In frustration, they growl.

Hours pass by, and the leopard remains in the tree. As dawn breaks, the brothers remain dozing beside the tree, suddenly a thud awakes them and a jolt of the leopard into the bushes sends the lions off in a panic to try and catch it. Knowing that they have little chance of finding it, they turn back to the carcass that remains. Quickly the two males eat what is left, growling at each other as they try to dominate the kill. Having gorged themselves, they pass out underneath the tree. Vultures begin circling the sky ...

INTRODUCTION

"Ethical behaviour is doing the right thing when no one else is watching- even when doing the wrong thing is legal." (Leopold, A. 1949)

I read this quote in Aldo Leopold book, the Sand County Almanac¹, at the beginning of my studies at Schumacher College, and it resonated deeply towards my action in making a difference in the field of conservation and sustainability. My interest in ecological sustainability began with my involvement in the natural world, being taught and guided into experiencing the brutal truths of nature, allowing me to integrate myself a bit more, and build a holistic understanding of the world in which we live. The deepest realisation I came to is that Academia must contribute to the outcome of learning not be an end in itself. Action based learning allows the inherent relationships around us to contribute to our question, and brings the life it needs to understand the subject. The nature of learning is within the experience itself. Therefore the quote above motivated and inspired me to do things differently, to do the right thing even if it was seen as 'wrong'.

Congruently, George Monbiot has also inspired and re-wilded my perception of the world. I read his book 'Feral' along the Banks of the Amazon River. This quote Introduced below, will give the rigour

¹ LEOPOLD, A., 1949. *A Sand County ALMANAC*. London: Oxford University Press

this complementary paper needs, in order to fully express how Eco- Literacy needs a deeper sense of involvement in the natural world.

“Some people see rewilding as a human retreat from nature; I see it as a re-involvement. I would like to see the re-introduction into the wild not only of wolves, Lynx, wolverines, beavers, boar, moose, bison and perhaps one day in the distant future- elephants and other species, but also of human beings. In other words, I see rewilding as an enhanced opportunity for people to engage with and delight in the natural world.”(Monbiot, 2013:11)

With these influences in mind, I decided to write a script for a documentary that would tell or rather begin to inform the story of tracking our inner and outer ecologies. The content of the script brings in my experience of the last three years, but more importantly, how the theory learnt within my coursework at Schumacher College might influence the natural contexts that I met. Allowing Theory and concept to meet images, gives the reader/participant the opportunity to experience a little more of the ‘whole’, giving a deeper, more felt experience of the subject. I have written many papers in the past, but I have never edited, produced or directed my own documentary, so this provided a much greater challenge for me. This being said, it is important for me to explain the rationale of this documentary on what it aims to achieve. Firstly I will give an introduction of tracking and how it has influenced the enquiry of ecological learning. Following this, I will look into Ecological Design Thinking and the State of the Planet and how tracking is important for our engagement with the issues we are facing within biodiversity loss worldwide.

I will then briefly engage with different chapters found within the documentary and further analyse the relativity of its influence to a direct experience. Finally, there will be a reflection of this process of learning, followed by the appendices that explain how the film was put together, and what other references I used, such as the written journal and blog posts.

Research Methodology

Action Based Research

Action Based Research as explained by Richard Sagor (2000) is a disciplined process of enquiry conducted by and for those taking action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the participant in improving and/or refining his or her action.

“With each new phase of synthesis to emerge from biological inquiry, the humanities will expand their reach and capability”

Edward O Wilson

"No man can draw a free breath who does not share with other men a common and disinterested ideal. Life has taught us that love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction"

W. Scott Olsen

"Ecology is pulling up a dandelion and finding that everything is attached"

John Muir

These quotes help nourish my motivation to get out into the field and directly integrate the knowledge gained in the coursework at Schumacher college, to the interconnected web of people and nature. To experience and see how people engage with theories, whilst being in the field, made the research more holistic towards my enquiry of Ecological Learning through Direct Experience. It also helped me improve and become better at becoming a natural guide in the wilderness.

Ecological Design Thinking and the state of the Planet

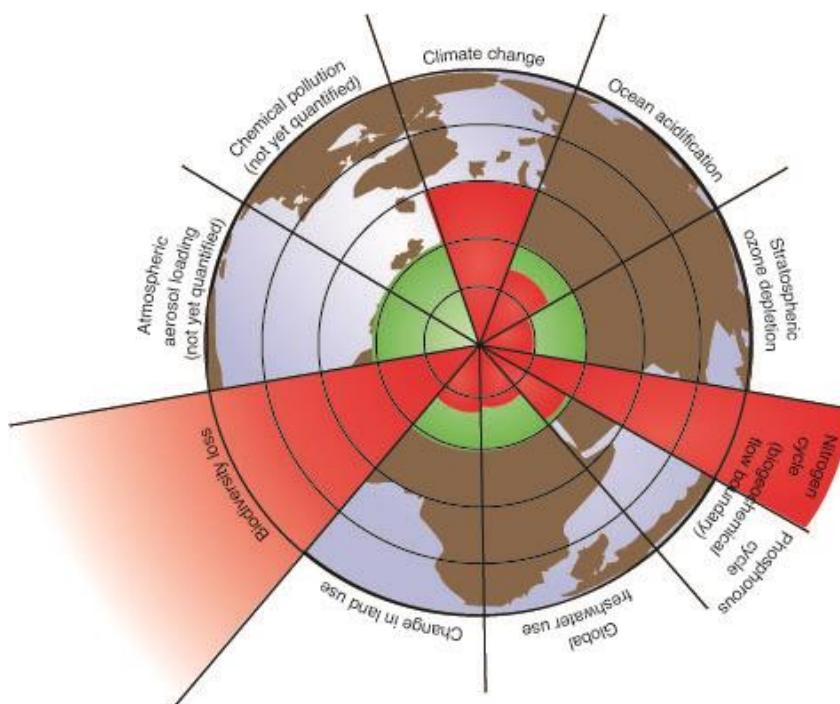


Figure 1: Stockholm Resilience Centre

"We cannot win this battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature as well- for we will not fight for something we do not love "(Gould, S; 1991)

This quote and the diagram above by the Stockholm Resilience Centre reassure my decision of turning this master's thesis into a documentary, as we can see above; biodiversity loss is our biggest problem worldwide. Focusing our attention on the loss of biodiversity, will help us find better regulation of the earth's climate, as the biotic community directly influences the carbon cycle. Therefore this has been my core concern within my writing at Schumacher College, and I believe that a deeply rooted rational of ecological design thinking course, should be to ask how we can re-integrate ourselves in the biotic community?

It is difficult to create a bond when only using a medium of writing. Complementing my rational analysis with visual stimulus, allows my question of tracking eco-literacy through direct experience to become more whole in its understanding. It allows the participant viewing it, to experience the literature more fully. Ecological Design thinking has been about tracking the interconnected relationships of the natural world, and trying to understand our place within it. I used my rational mind to extent, but for a change, allowed my intuitive, felt and sensory ways of knowing that Carl Jung 2 explains within his Jungian Mandala. To lead and guide me through this process of both unlearning (the linear approach to ecosystem thinking) and learning a more whole understanding of ecology, relationship and design. Climate change and the state of the Planet needs humanity to access their heart centres, so they may bring their self-realized value into the world. The natural world allows us to freely access these ways of knowing, and may therefore help individuals to be more conscious of the non-human world. The issues that arise from the current state of planet need the active re-involvement of the human species back into the interconnected web of life.

After learning about the state of the planet, and how Biodiversity is being impacted world-wide, I decided to try and create a model for learning, where both science and theory might exist in relationship with the natural world, where the experiential side of learning might meet the rational/scientific approach.

² Jung,C.G. 2009

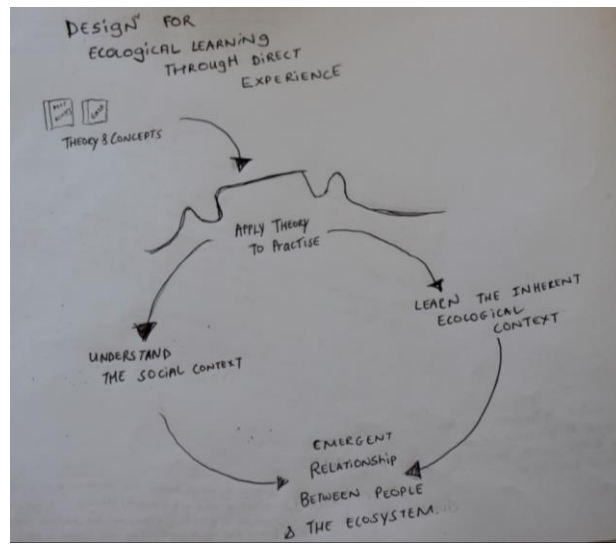


Figure 2: The design process I implemented to my thesis

Roberto Fraquelli (a lecturer within during my coursework at Schumacher) helped me understand how Design thinking allows us to understand how parts combine within a process to create either intended or unintended (emergent) outcomes. The figure above is a design process I drew at the beginning of my thesis. To try and help me see how I was going to navigate myself through developing the documentary. During my third module at Schumacher College, we learnt how developing a design process, might allow us create a framework that might be implemented over an extended period of time. Roberto Fraquelli, explained that “Design is a process that links creativity and innovation. It shapes ideas to become practical and attractive propositions for users or customer Design may be described as creativity deployed to a specific end”. My goal for designing this documentary, was to allow myself, and in the process others, to explore deeper into ecological literacy in relationship to the natural world. Ecology on the other hand is based on our understanding of the relationships inherent within the natural world, and how they are uniquely interacting with one another (Brewer; 1993). Within the documentary, I go into more depth around what I believe Ecological Design Thinking is, and how we may benefit to use it as a process of learning that helps us to better understand how we may live in a more symbiotic relationship with the natural world. I will now look into the rational of tracking, and how the ‘idea’ tracking allows us to open ourselves to the interconnected whole.

An Introduction to ‘Experiential’ Tracking

With the core question of how a direct experience might help us better understand the terminology of Eco-literacy, I decided to look into the work of Louis Liebenbourg(1990), to discover the essence of a natural born tracker, In his book, the Art of Tracking, I found a relevant quote, that helps to bring the perception of a local indigenous tracker.

“Trackers themselves cannot read everything in the sand. Rather, they must be able to read into the sand. To interpret tracks and signs trackers must project themselves into the position of the animal in order to create a hypothetical explanation of what the animal was doing. Tracking is not strictly empirical, since it also involves the tracker's imagination. Generally speaking, one may argue that science is not only a product of objective observation of the world through one's perception. It is also a product of the human imagination. A creative hypothesis is not found or discovered in the outside world, it comes from within the human mind” (1990; 1).

This quote by Liebenberg elaborates on the notion that learning involves our attention to reading deeper than what might appear on the surface. In order for us to fully engage, and immerse ourselves with ecosystem understanding, it requires us to listen a little more, and unpack the variables that influence one another. When we perceive a tree, we must sit with it for a little longer to experience the greater whole of the tree. So in this manner, I sit with the Idea of rewilding our sense of place, and how we may begin to track not only science, but the world that exists in relation to science, and how combining these different ways of knowing, we may begin to perceive a deeper sense of meaning, and relationship to the greater whole. Within the next few Chapters, I try to explore the notion of tracking, and how it might allow Design to integrate what Roberto Fraquelli explained ecological design thinking to be “from human centred to all-of-life centered”.

Tracking the socio-cultural Field: providing a wider domain to the contribution of eco-literacy



Figure 3: A wooden carving of a child reading on boat on the amazon. In the background are children reading local stories

This chapter within the documentary gave me much energy, as it forced me to experience other perceptions, and the way in which they have a relationship to the land. I had some incredible moments with local people, tracking animals, fishing for food and laughing around the fires on both the river banks of the Sand River in Africa and the Amazon in South America

“We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” (Leopold, 1949)

This quote by Leopold reminds me of the experience I had meeting the local people within their ecological contexts; on the Amazon and in Africa. These people were the most connected to the land. They were also the most ‘whole’ beings in themselves and the relationships beyond them. I found that they are not as aware of the ‘egos’³, and therefore not as controlled by them. They are able to access their self-realization, and self-purpose, and contribute to a community of people that support them in return. What was very difficult, was to see how development practises such as Belo Monte, are impacting not only on the ecological systems, but the social systems itself. Within the documentary, I explore this issue further.

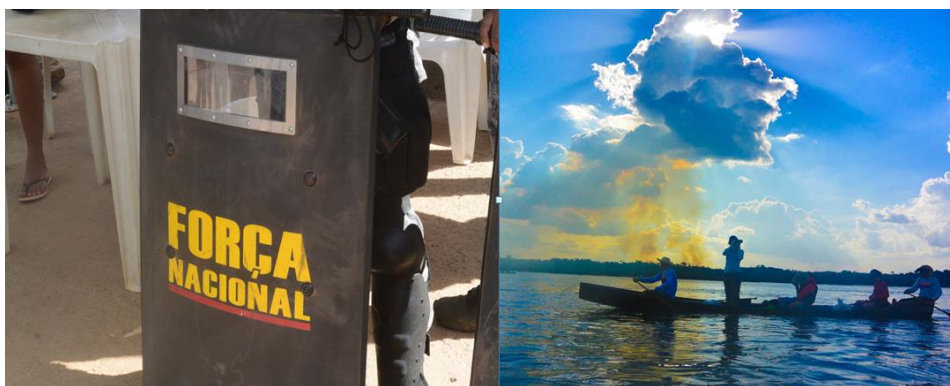


Figure 4: Arriving at Belo Monte, with activists from Green peace, WWF, Imaflora. We were met by the military: Forca Nacional

From what I felt and the general perception people have of the social system that live in solidarity along the banks of the Amazon, is that they need to become connected to the western civilised way of thinking in order to ‘helped’. What I believe we miss, when we have these ‘positive intentions’ is that we are stripping them of their inherent, natural values that give them their authentic connection to the life they have in their communities (both human and non-human). In the city, we live a more increased lifestyle of separation, and often, subconsciously seeking those connections through mediums such a Facebook and Instagram. The western culture needs to respect and learn from their way of life. We cannot look down on the social systems, because they are the key for helping a western mind, to find the inherent soul/mind and body connections that will help us to navigate ourselves though this overwhelming loss of biodiversity and empathy occurring world-wide.

Tracking the stories of our Past

“The Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert talk about the two “hungers”. There is the Great Hunger and there is the Little Hunger. The Little Hunger wants food for the belly; but the Great Hunger, the greatest hunger of all, is the hunger for meaning..

There is ultimately only one thing that makes human beings deeply and profoundly bitter, and that is to have thrust upon them a life without meaning.

There is nothing wrong in searching for happiness. But of far more comfort to the soul is something greater than happiness or unhappiness, and that is meaning. Because meaning transfigures all. Once what you are doing has for you meaning, it is irrelevant whether you're happy or unhappy. You are content - you are not alone in your Spirit - you belong.”

Van der Post (1961)

Tracking the stories of our past is essentially looking back at the magical intelligence that gave the ‘first’ people, the valuable connections to the natural world. This quote by Van der Post and the Chapter within the documentary is fulfilling a void within me, that still continues. The soul is constantly seeking meaning and relationships with something much greater than our own self-knowledge; it is continuously trying to wake our conscious up to the infinite amount of connection that is inherent around us.

Within Module one (the ecological Paradigm- Living Earth and the Anthropocene), with Stephan Harding, I was deeply inspired how he was able to introduce story-telling into his way of teaching and guiding us into eco-literacy. It was an extremely effective way of immersing us into his work. His influence and my time on the Amazon River gave rise to my interest in bringing the component of story-telling into the documentary.

Living up in the Cederberg Mountains for twenty days after all my experiences in England and South America was really important for me, as it provided the perfect time to reflect on all the knowledge I had learnt over the year. Storytelling and ecological restoration I found were the two things that really resonated with my intuition. So when the grade 10 boys from Bishops School (a private school from Cape Town) came up, I decided to bring the knowledge learnt by Laurence Van der Post (1961⁴) and George Monbiot (2013)⁵ to them. It proved to be very successful, as they were genuinely

⁴ VAN DER POST, L., 1966. *A Walk with A White Bushman*. 1 edn. London: Chatto&Windus.

engaged with the stories I was telling them, and when I asked them to imagine the landscape of what it was like years ago, and how it might look in years to come, they were inspired to learn more and have more direct experiences with the natural world. To see how this inherent knowledge of the bushman relationship with the land, might help them to develop their emotional conscious to the living world. Deepening this bond, might bring about a new found respect for other beings, which will open our eyes to the genius of a diverse ecosystem

Within the documentary I tell a story about how the hippo came to be, I practised this story with many kids over these past few months since Schumacher College, and it has been incredible to see how the story engages the children, and helps them learn a few important facts about a hippo that we all should know, because if we don't, how are we supposed to understand their behaviour, which both gives us the emotional connection, and knowledge to sustain and conserve their numbers.

Tracking the philosophy and mind-set of a local Tracker

“Conservation is getting nowhere because it is incompatible with our Abrahamic concept of land. We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” (Leopold; 1949)

This chapter brought out an extremely intuitive element for me. Writers such as David Abram, Jane Goodall, Arnae Naess, Aldo Leopold, Stephan Harding and Credo Mutwa deeply inspired me through their books to directly experience the intrinsic value hidden within the animate earth. Their motivation pushed me towards learning more from the Dartington forest, Amazon rainforest and the Cederberg Mountains.

There was no way for me to rationally understand the mind-set of a tracker. I needed me to move out and experience the land itself, and how that interaction might help me learn more about my inner knowing, and the knowing that connects us to the resilience of the ecosystem. Spending time at Londolozi Game reserve with the trackers was an extremely influential moment in my life; it was the first time, where I completely relied on the felt experience of my body. To stand, facing some of the biggest animals on this planet is something that I will hold forever, and the emotional connection developed as an outcome of those interactions, have only left me questioning and seeking

VAN DER POST, L., 1984. *In a Province*. 1 edn. Great Britain: Penguin books.

VAN DER POST, L., 1961. *Heart of the Hunter*. 1 edn. Toronto: Hogarth Press.

· MONBIOT, G., 2013. *Feral*. 1 edn. London: Penguin Group.

more. I am still very young in learning these deeper connections, because of my western up-bringing .But Being silent, and listening to the interactions of the natural world, allows me to see a little more of the interconnected whole, and the mind-set that is buried beneath the 'ego' (face value) of the ecosystem.

The main conclusion from this chapter is that this ecological mind-set of local indigenous trackers is still present in modern society today. Without us realizing it, we all have the capacity to access these ways of knowing, we just have to become open to looking for it(Monbiot;2013). Exploring this, we begin to grow our inner, emotional intelligence, and through this self-knowledge we may grow a deeper, more connected relationship with the natural world. Finally, by understanding the inherent impact a leopard has within its territory, and the trophic cascades (Monbiot, 2013) that are an outcome of its influence, may help us see the need for our key stone species within our wildernesses. Building space for wildlife may be the necessary solution towards both combating climate change (carbon sequestration), and changing the story of global ecological extinction.

Tracking Gaia and our place amongst the stars



Figure 5: Sitting with friends in the Cederberg and learning the stars

I have loved getting to know Gaia theory over the past year. Gaia theory was coined by Dr James Lovelock, explaining that the earth is a living organism, in which the biotic and Abiotic environments are directly influencing one another, and the emergence of this, is the regulation of the earth's climate (lovelock, 2005⁶).

I began tracking this idea of our place in the stars since module one, although I didn't focus on it in depth during the course work in ecological Design Thinking. I got to spend time with Stephan Harding within the forests of Dartington. What a special time it was for me to walk with him

through this forest. It was incredible to talk about all these deep theoretical concepts out in the wild, and to see how it responds back to us when we incorporate the land as 3rd person. To see the world as alive, and animate, gives a whole new, rich texture to it, allowing my relationship with the earth to deepen. To paddle down the Amazon River and think about where the water came from and where it will go, gave me much depth of clarity. Allowing ourselves to comprehend the carbon cycle, might help us to negotiate and make more accurate decisions towards future policies in curbing the dramatic increase of carbon into the atmosphere.

.Albert Einstein explains that the most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious; it is the source of all true art and science. Within the documentary, I attempt to stimulate their (viewer) curiosity of the universe through their own questioning of their relationship to it. How might we be connecting to the world outside of this blue dot? To stop and realize how significant, yet insignificant we are at the same time is a powerful realization. If we can communicate a direct experience of the night time with our children, we may open them up to seeing more than just the self- As Allan Watts says, "Self implies other". A relationship created with the unknown, pushes us to learn more about whom we are as a species and our relationship to the non-human others.

Conclusion and Reflections



Figure 6: A sunset on the Amazon River

I am hugely grateful for this experience, the learning is still extremely alive with me, even as I write this. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know more about myself and the world around me. Time spent with the natural world has given me much, good and bad, yet not bad in the sense of negative. But rather how we have



Figure 7: Matheus and I living in a community on the Cederberg mtns

conversations around things that contradict one another. Carl Jung(1961) helped me to see that everything that has light on it, still casts a shadow, and modern society does not allow us to hold on to these shadow, it inherently makes us frown at the them, and try to squash that side of ourselves to the back of our minds, yet it never fully escapes us. Therefore coming to terms that the shadow was an important insight, the more we learn to have a conversation with it, that doesn't force us to neglect it. The more we can allow our ego to die and find room for our inner selves to influence the world of relationships in which we live. What sums up the idea of community for me, is how becoming aware of both the social and natural communities helps to that stabilize our emotions, which brings us to the realization of the need to nurture and respect them, for both ourselves and the generations that are still to follow.

The process of this thesis was not easy, as it was continuously changing, it felt very alive whilst I was travelling the world, and I wanted to keep on this element. I have, by no means completed my work, it has only just begun. Tracking the inner ecology and its relationship to the outside world will be a life time Exploration. I am grateful to this thesis and Schumacher, for helping me start this journey of self-fulfilment and self-knowledge.

The economics module two, during our coursework at Schumacher College was the one I struggled with the most during my time there. But looking back it now, I feel that it was exceptionally important for me to deepen this element, as it ultimately connects what I am passionate about, and its relation to the monetary environment. I enjoyed writing the paper with classmate Thomas Rossi, about how when we begin to look at the design thinking aspect of relationship with a tree in its natural environment, we may learn valuable lessons around creative collaboration. If I had more time, I would have loved to have deepened this thinking around how we may learn from the interconnected web, within our economic structure.

I have so enjoyed my time during time doing this Masters in Ecological Design Thinking. Of course, there were times of difficulty, but through those hard moments, came the true realizations of what the essence of what Ecology, Design and Thinking, might entail. Sitting down with the literature, and then walking out through the wilderness, pondering my relationship to this great inspiring planet, has restored much energy within me, and I look forward to deepening both the scientific rational and irrational elements that contribute to the whole, that ecological design thinking is.

Epilogue: Encountering a Lion

I take a long sip from my water bottle, as I overlook the landscape in front of me, whilst reflecting on my luck of having this incredible experience. It's been seven days out here, walking the different regions of the Londolozi game reserve. It's my final day and I have to walk a long distance, around 42 km. I exchange my rifle to my left hand and pull out my dirty, crinkled map from my top pocket. I am currently at Piva pan; I still have a distance to go. Suddenly the grey Turaco bird alarms with its 'go away' call. I need to be careful now, as an alarm call can often tell you that there is a predator or a dangerous snake close by. I walk slowly for a few minutes, noticing the silhouette of a kudu bull in the distance.

As I come round a corner to head east on a dirt track, I hear the sound of ox pecker, this is one of the most important sounds of the bush, as it will inform you of the presence of larger animals such as the Buffalo and the rhino. I send thanks to the red billed ox pecker, as I can see the horns of a large and old buffalo. This is one of the most dangerous encounters on foot in the bush, because these old buffalos are too old to keep up with the herd, so they just relax in the long green grasses and graze all day on their own. They can become angry and dangerous as they are too old to run away from predators, so their best defence is to try and run you down. With this sighting I turn and walk away, radio in the sighting and recalculate my new journey.

After this incredible encounter, I head back in the same direction in which I came. Whilst walking, I become aware of a strange feeling... as if I am being stared at. I can't explain this sensation, something stirs within me, I look up into the sky, and two vultures are circling out of the sun. I continue forward, and to my astonishment I come across tracks of two Coalition members (male Lions). I analyse the spoor, and they are on top of vehicle tracks, which means that they walked here within the last 12 hours. I take out my powder to see which way the wind is blowing, it's heading south. I call in the tracks on radio "tracks of two coalitions members heading east on Siding 61". I confirm with my head ranger, and explain that I am going to head south along the road 'round rock pan' as was already planned on my map earlier. I hold my rifle a little more tightly as I continue down the road. To my left is thick bush, and to my right is an open field. I survey the land, all seems fine. I continue forward, until suddenly I see two males stand up beneath an umbrella thorn around 200 metres from me, I stand motionless for what felt like an eternity, but must have been around 3 seconds. I lifted up my arms, as I was trained to do, and the males immediately exited the scene. I was surprised to watch them move away so quickly. My adrenaline was present until I reached camp. What an unreal experience.

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Appendices

Within the Appendices, I will look into the order of the film, and how it was directed and produced. I then would then to acknowledge the people that have deeply influenced my experiences over the last year. Finally I would I will introduce how the script and journal was written.

Details of Documentary

Sam Chevallier – Director of Ecological Learning through Direct Experience

I brought in the content, the story. I directed how the story was going to be told over film. From the course work this year I did a video called Rewind – Rewild.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fT4AAkbIOsQ>

I had a conversation with Seaton Baxter and Simon Bradbury after doing this interview on rewilding land, and we came to the insight that I have a skill in doing things over the medium of Movie. So this is where the motivation came from to do the thesis that brings me into the challenge of doing something that I have never done before, and to see what difference it might make to people.

Already, a week into releasing the video online I have had 900 people watching it. This means that my interest and field of study (tracking) has been decentralized to many more people than a written piece of work would have. To positively influence the debate of climate change, we need share all we know with as many people as possible.

Camera men and editing

I did most of the filming for this movie, but Mattheus Jung and Justin Woods (friend of mine), helped me where I was not able. For example, when I was behind on camera, or when we were doing a time lapse of the stars. I was present at every part of the filming, and directed it in such a way, that narrates the documentary

Supervisors

Seaton Baxter (head professor in Ecological Design at Schumacher College): Seaton Baxter was my core supervisor, who helped me to design the structure of the thesis on all its content. Thank you Seaton for the way in which you helped my thesis to emerge the way in which it did. I am so grateful for your endless wisdom and guidance. I truly hope to do more in the future

Stephan Harding (Founder of Schumacher college and the Holistic science Masters at Schumacher College): Stephan was my second supervisor who I went walking in the woods once a week, and would have deep conversations around writers, such as Henry Bortoft, Carl Jung and Laurence Van Derp Post. Stephan, thank you so much for deepening my curiosity for holistic science, and bringing me into the knowledge of the animate earth. My perception of my place and experience of life on earth has been altered in such a way as I can begin to see more

Galeo Saintz (founder of Wild Peace alliance): Galeo was my point of contact when I arrived back in South Africa, He also helped me to establish a structure that would work well for the documentary. On top of this, he also provided me with literature that would substantiate my enquiry. Galeo, you are an inspirational man that I have thoroughly enjoyed listening too. You have done so much for wildlife in Africa, and I am truly grateful for all your lessons. I look forward to the opportunities of working closer to you in the future

Acknowledgment to WEB OF LIFE, that helped me get to where I am today

Mattheus Jung-

Mattheus helped me film and edit the documentary. There is no way I would be where I am with out him. He has been such a brother to me during this process. Thank you for your support and insights brother. We shared some great and interesting times in the Cederberg Mountains. Brasil and South Africa have got a lot in common, and so I hope we work together again in the not so distant future. Abraso.

Peter Ramaindo –

Thank you Peter for engaging me into such a felt experience of the natural world. You were really able to help me gather my thoughts on theories and concepts and apply them to the direct experience of the natural world

Breno, Jorge Dani, Camilla, Juliana and the rest of the Brazilian families and organisations that cared for me

My time in Brazil was deeply enriching experience, and has dramatically influenced my way perception of the way in which people interact with environment, and how the environment influences people. Thank you so much for the hospitality. Please know that you are more than welcome to come to South Africa, and spend time with me here.

Ecological Design Thinkers

Your energy and influence was radiant from the beginning, I was nervous when I first arrived at the college, yet in no time I felt comfortable and relaxed. I am still feeling deeply inspired by you all, and so excited to see where you all go in the not so distant future, Thank you

The community of Schumacher

How lucky and honoured I was to meet you all. To have connections around the world, makes me feel hugely optimistic for the future. The creative economy is key for the future, and the more we can learn / share together, the more we can influence our local communities and countries. I am so grateful to you all for you kind energy and wisdom

Sustainable Brothers and Sisters

You guys have all been my extended family. I am so glad that we all managed to keep this organisation going and flowing. You have all brought such an important element into the way in which we may begin to see our lives unfold in the future

My family

There is no way that I can express my deep gratitude and love through words. Thank you so much for supporting every step of my journey. It is so good to be back in South Africa with you all. An important insight I had on the Amazon River, is that the most relevant connections we have is with our family, and the nature that surrounds it. I look forward to deepening this when I get home.

Bishops High school

Thank you so much to all the teachers and students from Bishops, that helped make my documentary a real possibility. Bishops is truly a school that is looking to learn more, and diversify their ways of knowing.

The Sustainability Institute

The sustainability institute positively influence by objective reasoning, which helped to diversify my writing skills. They also helped me understand some of the concepts that I was going to further at Schumacher College. Thank you to all my colleagues and teachers from my post grad in 2013, you are the reason why pushed myself to experience more within the natural world. I hope we may work together to build a more connected and integrated country.

The Cape Leopard Trust

The Cape Leopard Trust provided me with a camera trap, that I would place around the mountains where the grade 10 boys from bishops were camping. My time living on my own in the Cederberg Mountains is a memory I will cherish for the rest of my life. Thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to seeing how we may bring the children of our Cape Town to experience more of it.

Londolozi Game Reserve

Londolozi provided me with my deepest experiences with Wilderness. Thank you to all the rangers and trackers that helped with my training there. It was difficult leaving this community as the land brought so much to me. I hope to one day be immersed within this magical landscape, and walk among the beauty that surrounds this area.

Biomimicry South Africa

I did a number of workshops with Claire Janisch in 2013 and 2014. Thank you for inspiring my journey into learning more about the incredible designs of the natural world.

Plant the Seed

I did a workshop for plant the seed when I got back from Brazil. Thank you for this opportunity. I hope to do more work with you in the mountains of Cape Town, teaching children about the importance of ecosystem resilience.

The movie Script

Most of this work was prepared in either my drawing book or in my journal. I will be sending all these up to Schumacher College, so that they may be looked at and analysed together with this written component, and the documentary itself.

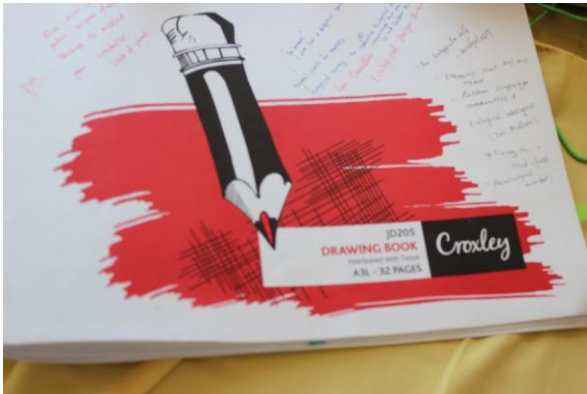


Figure 8 Script book

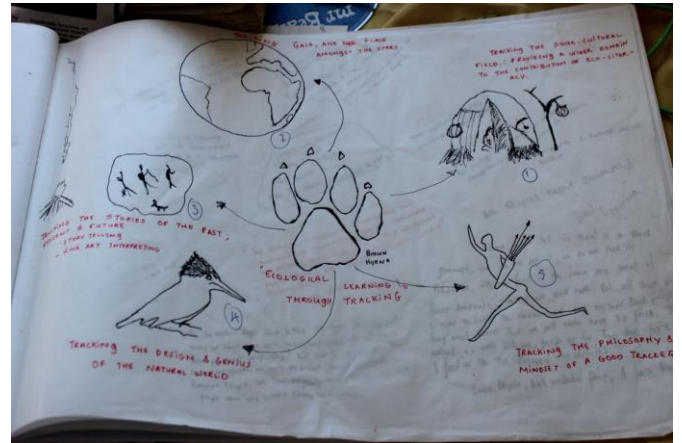


Figure 9 : Final structure for documentary



Figure 10: Journal

Resources gained as an outcome of 'experiencing Brazil 2015'

(These resources have influenced the reason why I this paper was written in the 1st person)

During my time in Brazil, I wrote a book long journal, writing down all my thoughts, through all these deep experiences- figure 10.

8th September

This actually does not feel real in the slightest. Here I sit, slap bang in the middle of the Amazon River with Vagalume. I am proud of myself for being open to such an opportunity. So far, I have slept one night in a hammock, looking at the multitude of stars in the sky. It is so strange to be looking up at Scorpio and Orion from another continent. Once again, I am travelling in an area where people don't understand me; I find it really difficult at times, because it is a lot of time to spend with one's self. Yet I am learning a lot about who I am, and who I would like to be in the near future. Therefore this is such valuable time. I wake to hear an array of many different birds, so eloquent...

Sitting here now, watching the young kids playing on the banks of the Amazon. I think to myself, I wonder what they dream of becoming when they grow older, and where they want to live. I think back to my childhood, stuck in a boarding house for 10 years, having to go to church every day, and be tested, standardised with every child in the country. That was not freedom, this is. To have access to food, water, family and nature is what means everything. I worry for my culture back home, and even worse I worry how our westernized mind-set worries for these communities, and thinks that bringing services to them, and connecting them to the city is the right thing.

Am I the person I wanted to be when I thought of myself growing up when I was a child? I think so, but I was definitely not encouraged to experience nature the way I have done over the last few years, this inner and outer search, came from my need for deeper meaning in life. The modern, western society is so shallow, and does not give us the depth we need to in order to be truly happy within ourselves. I am going to continue to diversify my world view, and learn more perception on how people live within this incredible planet.

The physical journey is attached, with the hard copies of this paper

Blog

During my time in Brazil, I put together a blog to share all of the enriching experiences I was having. These Blog posts directly influence the documentary and commentary. The web domain below, will take you to the site

<https://weboflifebrasil.wordpress.com/>

To conclude, designing a documentary instead of a written thesis was a challenge. But I have had 1400 people watch the documentary online already. If we truly want the world to evolve into a consciousness that is connected with both social and ecological systems in context to their sense of place, it is important that we share and decentralize the knowledge we learn.

Thank you