

## A GRAND PLAN FOR EARTH LOVE EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: The dream becomes a nightmare. So, what went wrong?

Rob O'Donoghue

### INTRODUCTION

The recent critique of the Council for the Environment (CFE) core syllabus for environmental education (Taylor *et al.*, 1993) worried many people active in environmental education. Few have disputed that the strategies and claims of the Council merited a critical response. What appears to have been most disturbing, however, is that the critique exposed possible error and myth within approaches to environmental education in southern Africa. This has shaken the spiritual solidarity of some environmental educators and features of environmental education programmes are being found conceptually wanting.

In cases like this, where issues within a strongly held conventional wisdom are under review, critique can be extremely difficult. Fervent believers, spiritually committed to the cause, tend to reject criticism as academic or as simply a contesting opinion among many others of equal merit. Also, the adversity of the process may do little more than strengthen a resolve to resist outside criticism. Within this state of solidarity participants tend to be unable to separate error and untenable theoretical positions from the fundamental beliefs that they hold most dear. Any form of critique is consequently seen as a direct attack on the cause, in this case, an innate 'earth-love' purity of purpose intent on educating children in, about and for the environment.

### CONCEPTUALISING THE REVIEW PROCESS

With these issues in mind, and a desire to clarify questions related to this theory of Earth Love Education, this review has been situated within the documents that pertain to the core syllabus proposal (CFE, 1993). It is thus not a criticism of the theory from another point of view but is centred on the coherence of claims within the core syllabus, and the resource materials and research that are directly linked to and apparently underpin it. Evidence of correspondence between core syllabus, other books and associated research has also been derived from the documents themselves.

The review is thus an unfolding exploration that examines key ideas and claims within the documents. Its purpose has been to reveal the rationale that underpins the core syllabus and to assess if it is well founded within the research process through which it claims to have been constructed (Opie, 1992:65).

To achieve this the review initially traces correspondence between features of the core syllabus (1993), published resource materials for environmental education (1992) and the

foundational research (1990) from which they all derive. This reveals what we are dealing with and exposes key issues that need to be examined.

The review is then centred on the underpinning models and frameworks that claim to provide an 'earth-love' rationale for environmental education. This reveals a web of erroneous assumptions and inconsistencies within the theoretical propositions that underpin this approach to environmental education (Opie, 1990; 1992; 1993a). These problems may account for much of the nightmare of contested issues of process, orientation and substance that has accompanied the core syllabus project of the Council for the Environment (Taylor *et al.* 1993).

### REVEALING THE GRAND PLAN

#### Direct correspondence between syllabus and books

The initial critique of the core syllabus was centred on its construction, the claims it makes and its appropriateness for environmental education in southern Africa. The core syllabus booklet makes

no mention of authorship but the consultant who coordinated the development of the document was Dr Frank Opie (Pers comm). Figure One shows how the proposed teaching and learning method section of the draft syllabus corresponds with the

design of the 'Song of the Earth' series of books. That this key structural feature of the syllabus corresponds with his books is a serious ethical dilemma for Dr Opie and also for the Council.

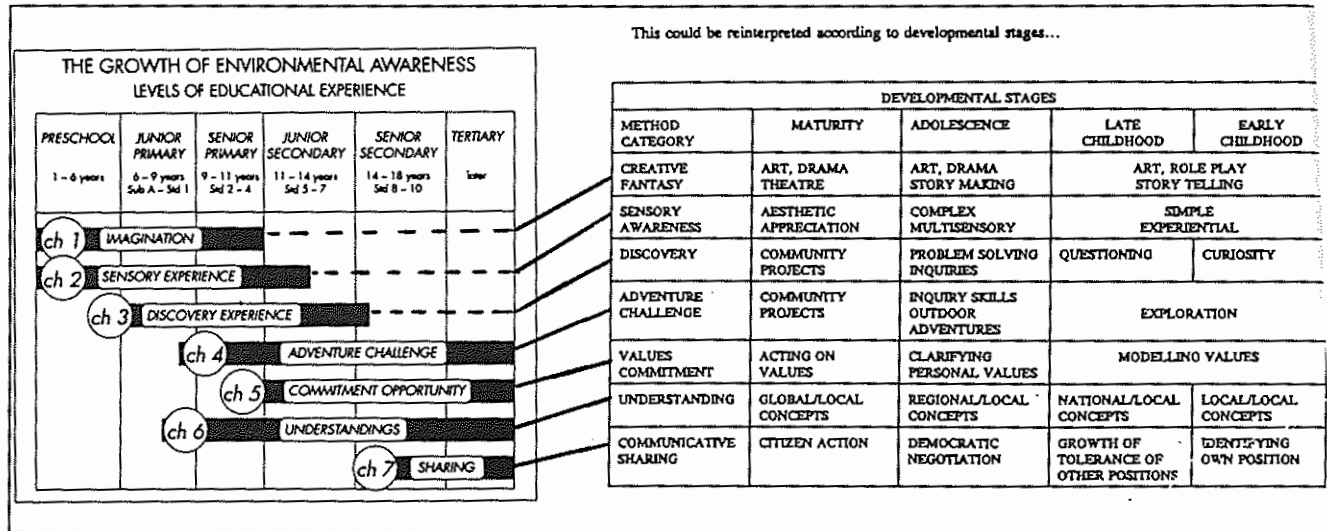


Figure 1 Book chapters (Opie, 1992)

Core syllabus developmental method framework (CFE, 1993)

**Logical steps to earth love**

The shared framework of teaching and learning methods of the syllabus and books is, in effect, a rational framework for enacting the objectives and concepts of environmental education throughout the education system. To shape this 'catch-all' orientation for environmental education, the proposed core syllabus states that:

*Environmental education is by nature holistic and contains a strong values and skills dimension as indicated in the objectives outlined in this document (CFE, 1993:7).*

This orientation complements the earlier text, 'Rousing the Sleeper,' which is structured so that each chapter of the book, 'represents a further step on the road to earth love' (Opie, 1992:xiv). This structure is derived from a conviction that, 'there is a logical sequence to be followed if earth love is to blossom as a product of learning' (Opie, 1992:xiv) and that 'The seven chapters of the book represent seven different approaches to environmental education, each building on the experience of the previous stage (Opie, 1993:xiv).

**A grand plan to awaken earth love**

The synthesis of logical stages of environmental education and its correspondence with the syllabus reveals that, in essence, what has emerged is a **grand theory of developmental ages and stages for environmental education to awaken earth love.**

The core syllabus states that environmental education:

*is both multi cultural and multi creedal and has a strong ethical base (values education) (CFE, 1993:6).*

The corresponding 'Rousing the Sleeper' series presents itself as an *integrated, holistic work which relates environmental activities to one another within the framework of a logical model based on real people's experience (Opie, 1992:xv).* It also states that *environmental education is almost everything about everything! That's what makes it so educational (Opie, 1992:xiii).*

Beyond issues raised in the earlier critique of the core syllabus, the key question in this review is, are these ideas and frameworks well founded as a

theory of environmental education? To establish this we need to look at where the theories and frameworks have come from and how they have been constructed.

### A UNIVERSAL MODEL FOR EARTH LOVE

#### The construction of a theory of earth love education

Underpinning the framework of ages and stages for awakening earth love is a theory of how earth love develops and how to teach to this desirable end. Opie (1992) states that:

*Before attempting to promote earth-caring attitudes, teachers need to understand how individuals come to their perceptions of reality. (Opie, 1992:64)*

He describes a model of 'How the world 'without' becomes the world 'within,' as a starting point. In support of this he points out that this model has been *both credible and dependable under experimental conditions (Opie, 1992:65).*

The design of the earlier research (Opie, 1990) does not substantiate this claim because the transformations through which the theory was constructed reveals a doubtful synthesis that is neither credible nor dependable. Figure 2 illustrates the model in the book (Opie, 1992:65) and the model in the earlier research (Opie, 1990:39).

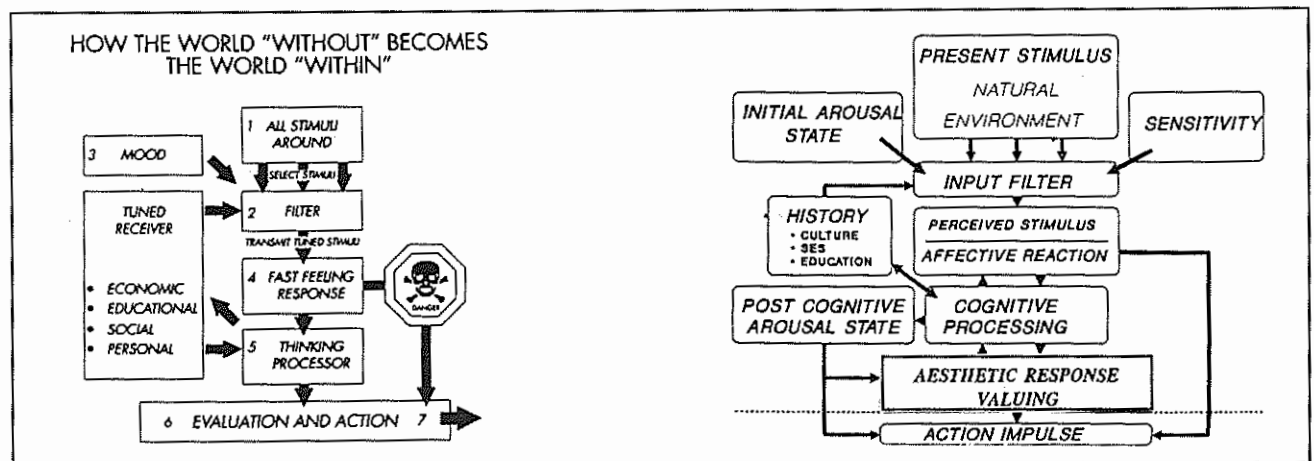


Figure 2 Model in books (Opie, 1992)

Model in research (Opie, 1990)

#### Deficiencies of correspondence within the models

The 'research model' developed within 'experimental conditions' appears similar at first sight but is significantly different to the emerging theoretical model of how the world 'without' becomes the world 'within.' Some notable differences are:

- \* Culture (as race), one of the most significant variables in approaching the differentiation of low and high aesthetic responses in the research, no longer features in the revised

model.

- \* The notion of a post-cognitive state of arousal / the aesthetic response of valuing, a key functional loop within the research model, also does not appear in the updated theoretical model.
- \* Another interesting feature of this somewhat linear flow diagram is that the notion of evaluation follows 'thinking' in the later model but does not appear in the earlier one.
- \* Also, the logic of the discourse of both

models is significantly different and does not always correspond with the functional stages of the diagrams.

The significant differences and shifts apparent in these transformations are more a 'dressing up' of the model to enhance its appeal than a simplification of the theory for lay readers. Although the omissions, transformations and ambiguities are of note, the key issue is how the model was constructed in the first place and how it was subsequently validated within the research process.

**The construction of the research model**

The research model was constructed as a composite model of factors believed to influence perception of the natural environment (Opie, 1990:39). It was developed as a framework for a research instrument to measure factors affecting perceptions of natural environments (Opie, 1990:51). Its content was derived from a list of variables claimed to influence positive attitudes to the environment (Opie, 1990:15), and a comparison of lists of affective preferences (Ulrich, 1983) and the contents of components of perception (Pocock, 1982).

It is of note that both Ulrich and Pocock explicitly avoided the trap of inferring functional interdependence within their categories of preference and components of perception. Despite this Opie proceeded to construct a functional model of environmental cognition with the elements of their models of perception (Opie, 1990:39).

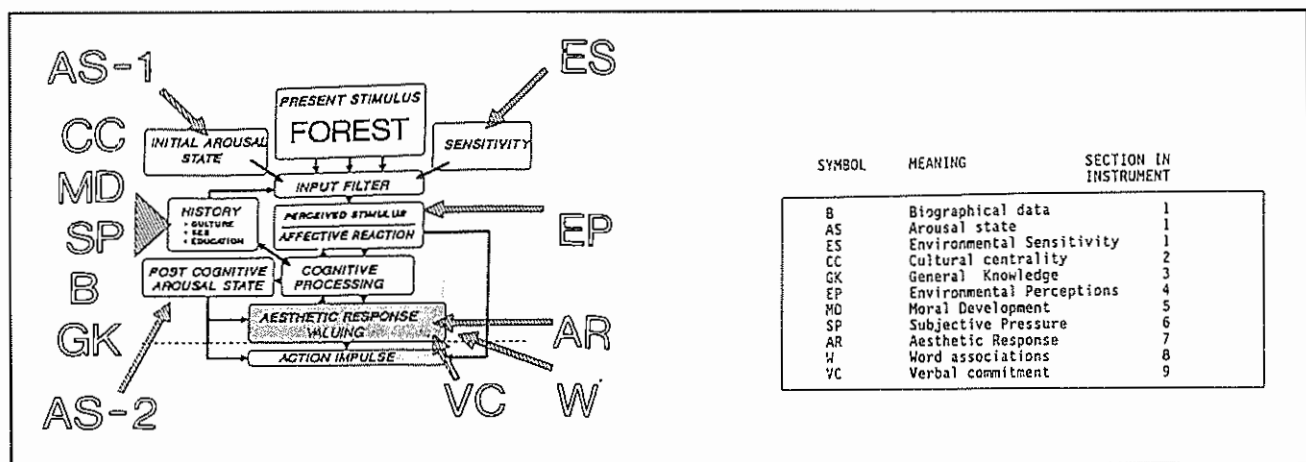
Within this loose eclectic synthesis, a series of errors and untenable transformations are apparent. In essence what appears to have happened is that lists of variables of perception were erroneously transformed / integrated into a functional model encompassing a synthesis of perception and cognition.

From this doubtful synthesis, the researcher appears to have constructed a grand theory of how the world without becomes a world of earth-love within.

**The validation of the model within the research design**

The research suggests that the model was operationalised through the development of an instrument for measuring aesthetic response (Opie 1990:46). A stated limitation of the study is, however, the measuring of aesthetic response as a dependent variable that predicts behavioral intention and transactional components (Opie, 1990:48).

In essence what was done here is the interlinking of components of perception within the flow diagram (Figure 3; Opie, 1990:51). That the perception variables are juxtaposed in a flow diagram (model) does not operationalise the model. The associative appearance of the model with each stage of the instrument simply creates an illusion that the instrument and model are a single entity. This illusion is carried through to the erroneous inference that the model was somehow validated within the research process.



**Figure 3** Linking of components of perception within the model (Opie, 1990)

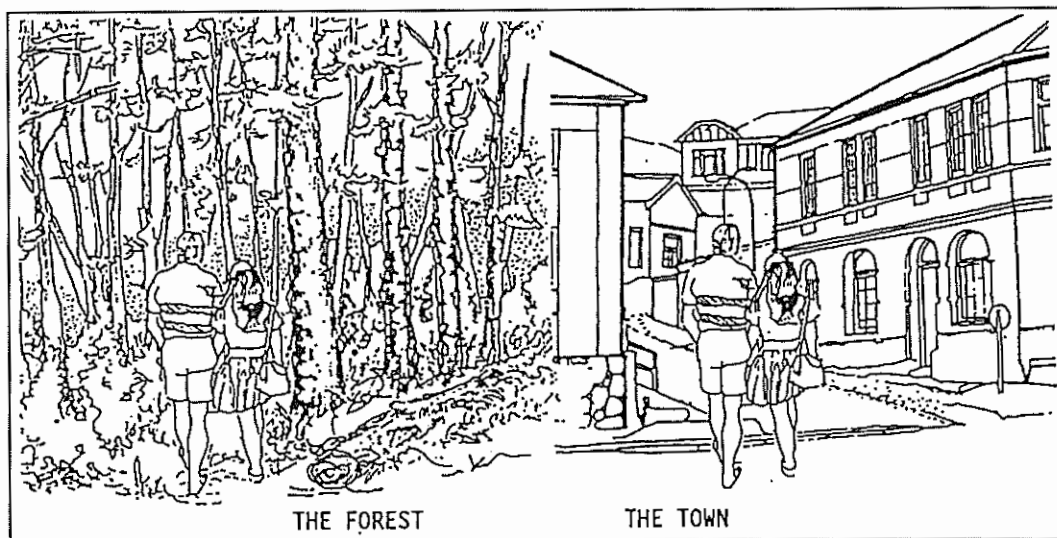
This is an error as the research itself only goes as far as claiming that *the components of the model were closely related to the formation of an individual aesthetic response in a forest environment* (Opie, 1990: 179) and that many of the factors within the instrument (perceptual components) *influence* it. The latter simply corresponds with the research from which the categories of perception were derived. In its causal inference are, however, the roots of the most serious error of all, the transposition of model and instrument into a grand theory. This occurred after the research and provides the rationale for the books and the method orientations of the proposed core syllabus.

What appears to have happened is that the research model became the conceptual foundations of a

theory of learning for environmental education. This is indefensible.

### Other design issues

A design flaw, of particular note is the translation of the questionnaire from English (origination) into other languages. The purpose of this was to assess the aesthetic response of differing racial groups. A problem here is that all of the students (English, Xhosa and Afrikaans) were given the same picture (figure 4) and asked, in their mother tongue, which place they liked best, and why.



From this and other questions and scales the Xhosa aesthetic response was inferred and found to be somewhat lower than others, but having a similar high and low score range. Categories of disadvantage / deprivation are used to account for this.

### A web of questionable assumptions, transformations and error

The most significant error within this is the transformation of interdependent variables into a structural functionalist model of how people construct the way they see the world. Were it not for the serious implications of the construction of a compelling theory of environmental education around this model, the problem could be dismissed

as simply a string of untenable transformations and erroneous methodological assumptions. The confusion between an integrated functional model of 'how the world without becomes the world within' and an instrument for 'measuring' aesthetic response is apparent throughout the work. If it is accepted that a model was constructed to develop an instrument, it does not follow that the apparently successful use of the instrument in some way validates the model.

The idea that this research process developed a dependable model of how 'the world without becomes a world within' is a serious error and entirely untenable. What presents as a compelling logic to promote earth caring attitudes is in effect little more than a collection of variables that appear

to influence preferences and components of how people see the world. These have, however, been erroneously concocted into a functional model of cognition and learning for shaping environmental values within a universal structure of ages and stages for environmental education.

## THE LOGIC OF AGES AND STAGES

### The origins of ages and stages

An integrated and holistic framework for earth love education is constructed around a 'feelings-first' orientation which assumes that *if the heart is right then the head will follow* (Opie, 1992:53). This is developed in a sequence of parallel stages where *the seven chapters in the book represent seven different approaches to environmental education* (Opie, 1992:xiv). The author claims that the sequence of stages *parallels, to some degree, the mental and moral development of the child from the preschool years to adulthood* (Opie, 1992:62). Each stage thus *reflects a theory of earth love education* (Opie, 1992:62). The central idea is that *peak experiences* of the beauty of nature (aesthetic response) lead to a *commitment to the earth* which occurs within a logical progression of seven interacting steps from imagination to sharing (figure 5).

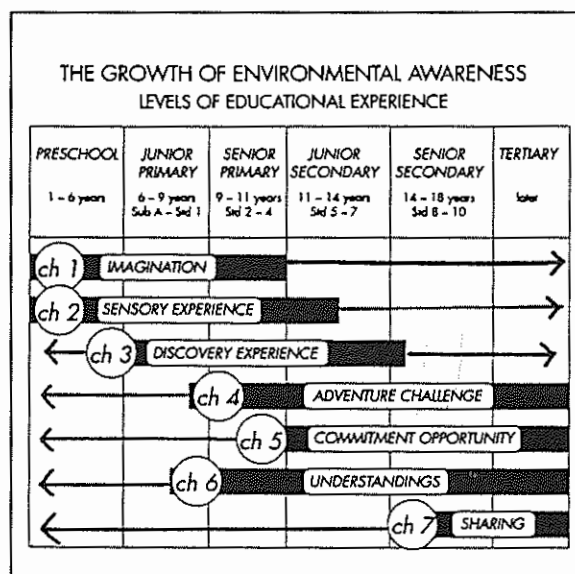


Figure 5 Extended range of stages

These developmental ages and stages appear to be

derived from a loose synthesis of Maslow's values theory, Piaget's stages of development (cognitive and moral), Kohlberg's stages of moral development and Caduto's model of values education (Opie, 1992:62).

By 1993, and referring to Piaget, *the inflexible lock-step process* of logical ages and stages is questioned and brought into doubt (Opie and Schuil, 1993:18). Following a discussion on this issue at a workshop in Durban, Opie resolved the problem of ages and stages himself. He demonstrated to us how the stages (Figure 5) should have been extended across the entire range of ages as they all apply to each age group.

The implications of this were lost to us at the time. By applying the categories to all ages, in effect, what he did was deconstruct the logical progression around which the books are structured.

Ironically, once the categories of environmental awareness are extended across the entire spectrum of ages, the somewhat tenuous distinctions between the categories of awareness themselves also simply disappear. The problem of ages and stages no longer exists other than as a defunct logic of questionable origins that underpins the structure of the 'Song of the Earth Series.'

The vexing problem that the seven categories for the growth of environmental awareness in the book (Opie, 1992:xv) do not correspond with or incorporate the research categories that influence positive attitudes to the environment (Opie, 1990:15) is, therefore, no longer an issue for this review.

### A feelings and facts blueprint

The 'blueprint' for constructing earth love is introduced as counter intuitive to conventional education that has put facts before feelings. Through this inversion the author points out that *the earth love process is primarily a feeling experience based on fact and not the other way round* (Opie, 1992:52).

This distinction between fact (cognitive domain) and feeling (affective domain) is a key theme within the research (Opie, 1990:37), the books of theory and activities (Opie, 1992:52), and the skills

and values objectives of the core syllabus (CFE, 1993:12). The majority of these ideas can be found in a dialectic interplay of facts and values, and the notion of cognitive and affective domains, throughout the text.

The idea of post-cognitive arousal (Opie, 1990:39) is an example of this. It assumes that the two (cognitive and affective) are separate things that are functionally interdependent so that first the one happens and then the other. There can be little doubt that 'feelingful' states (arousal) associated with 'flashes of insight' during exciting nature experiences are important but the only logical post-cognitive state, in humans, is death.

The confusion of terms and states apparent in the research is carried into the theory of '*feelings first*' (Opie, 1992:52) and the claim that traditional education has involved facts to the exclusion of feelings. The separation of affective and cognitive is also evident in the underlying logic that individual *peak experiences* (cognitive and / or affective and spiritual) lead to a cumulative feeling and understanding state of *earth love* (affective + cognitive / wonder), and then to an informed *commitment* to the earth through action.

To what extent is this the product of an error that differentiates between, and erroneously places in logical sequence, the ideas of affective and cognitive processes, states and domains? A possible explanation for this confusion might be found in a review of the fairly recent social processes that have brought the ideas of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of knowledge into prominence in education discourse.

### **The social construction of domains of knowledge**

The idea of domains of knowledge was applied by psychologists who were attempting to make public examinations more objective and reliable. Bloom and his teams of psychologists did this work in America and it appears to have been of value, at the time, for making examinations better. Unfortunately, what seems to have happened is that teachers soon started to use the idea of domains to teach children to pass examinations and psychologists increasingly used it more widely to theorise about teaching and learning.

### **Environmental education 'adopts' the affective**

Recently environmental educators schooled in the idea of domains joined this story. They called for holistic education and argued that values were being neglected. To 'carve out a place' for environmental education they then theorised that environmental education was an affective methodology, a cross-curricular approach and a values clarification process. Some, Opie (1989:9) for example, also linked this values focus to research on the functioning of the brain (left-brain; right-brain ideas) and ended up with a 'feelings first' theory of environmental education as a cognitive / affective and creative / practical cross-curricular framework for teaching and learning through environmental experience.

This synthesis is now emerging as conceptually deficient and inconsistent. A root cause of this would appear to be the transposition of the idea of domains into a functional model of human awareness and learning. These models and assumptions need to be re-examined as knowing, feeling and doing are closely connected and our 'minds' appear to work as a whole and in socialised orientations.

## **THE SPIRITUAL CONNECTION**

### **A summary of key connections**

At the heart of earth love education is the idea of **aesthetic response**, conceptualised in the model and measured by the instrument (Opie, 1990). This human potential is assumed to emanate from **peak experiences** of the beauty of nature. These **mystical / spiritual** experiences, noted by *in the vicinity of 80%* of research respondents (Opie, 1992:43), are deduced to shape the foundations of **earth love**. This is theorised to emerge through a logical sequence of processes involving outdoor experiences, values building interactions, personal choice, commitment / action opportunities and counselling towards a **revised moral / ethical code**.

These key conceptual threads of the theory of earth love education have emerged through a complex mixing of ideas. These have then been juxtaposed

within a compelling conventional wisdom that appeals for global spiritual renewal through a purity of environmental education interactions in nature with children. The roots of these ideals are difficult to uncover.

### **The roots of individual - global spiritual renewal.**

Within this synthesis are the interacting ideals of personal spiritual experiences in nature, shared and nurtured within values clarification interactions, to foster a global spiritual renewal. This position is akin to the ideological orientations of 'Christian National Education' after its transformation into a global spirituality of Mother Earth. These orientations and themes either underpin the original theory or emerge within the more recent texts to embrace personal nature / spiritual experience, an awakening a lost indigenous wisdom and the holistic reintegration of Mother Earth and a personal Creator.

The outcome of this successive elevation and catch-all synthesis is the construction of a utopian orientation where environmental education is almost everything about everything (Opie, 1992:xiii). Here the eclectic coupling of ideas is taken to absurd lengths and environmental education attains a position which can accommodate not only everybody but also almost every idea that they might have. The theory of earth-love seemingly becomes a utopian 'religion' of global spirituality.

### **The compelling force of the narrative**

Despite its poorly founded rationale, this escalating earth love narrative has a compelling force. The task of exposing questionable and erroneous features of its foundations has been extremely arduous as erroneous assumptions, transformations and propositions are interwoven within a text that has been founded on the everyday issues and dilemmas in modern education. This discourse projects and shifts many of the everyday dilemmas of education into a compelling vision of global spirituality where the struggle for clarity is superseded by a faith in the purity of spirit of the individual child and Mother Earth.

This is to be found within the extensive play on

poetic / dialectic and inversion devices. These are used to illuminate existing problems in education or to provide a compelling synthesis to resolve them. Some examples of these processes are:

- \* the dialectic interplay of facts and feelings as head knowledge and heart wisdom to explain how the terrifying woes of atomic energy might have been avoided with a science that was more holistically constructed within an earth spirituality (Opie, 1992:53); and,
- \* the call for a feelings first and facts balance if the spiritual potential or natural curiosity of the child is not to be crushed or extinguished by traditional methods of education (Opie and Schuil, 1993:21).

An example of the compelling potential of this poetic and mystifying trajectory of the text is the opening exploration of environmental education which concludes that:

*It is, rather, a search for the sacred behind the secular, the meaning behind the moment (Opie, 1992:xiii).*

The theme of environmental education as the crucible for resolving current education problems through its quest for national and global spiritual significance permeates the text. This discourse also acknowledges that all life experiences differ and that every opinion has equal relevance to individuals. Its ideological framework exemplifies the uniqueness of individual spiritual experience within an infinite variety of possible life experiences. These processes and progressions serve to construct a relatively untouchable utopian notion of purity, respect and a potential for good in, around and through everything that is of value and meaningful to the individual.

As the rationality of the discourse of researched models, logical ages and stages, and prevailing conventional wisdom is interplayed with a poetic mystification of child innocence, personal creator and Mother Earth, so an earth love theory of environmental education emerges as an ideology of global spirituality.

The outcome of this is a field that is all inclusive, all valuing and for all teachers everywhere. The



introduction to the book concludes:

*The emphases of environmental education vary with the life experience of its teachers. For some it is the understanding of the biological relationships of life. For others it is the interaction of the bio-physical and socio-political dynamics in society. Some teachers honour the challenge and lure of the "great outdoors" and the opportunity for personal character building as challenges are met. There are those who venerate the global life of the whole system, the great earth goddess Mother Earth, and those who worship the personal Creator of all things, believing that all relationships and gifts of life find their true meaning in Him (Opie, 1992:xiii).*

This conveys the impression that everything is included and that all orientations have equal validity both to individuals and within infinitely differing contexts. A tragic irony is that few teachers anywhere have participated in the construction of this narrative of global spiritual inclusivity but many are being attracted to its apparent rationality and the promise of better education.

### **A vanishing logic**

As all of the multiple layers of interlinked ideas and claims of earth-love education are subjected to scrutiny their claimed logic simply disappears within a morass of questionable eclecticism. The grand plan of earth education thus appears to be little more than a compelling illusion with little educational substance. This is particularly apparent in the eclectic blending of everything and anything into a spiritual framework within which there is a place for everything, all of which have merit to the individual.

Problems in this approach start to appear in its treatment of indigenous wisdom. This is a most recent theme within the Mother Earth narrative of the text and the previously deprived and disadvantaged indigenous peoples are imbued with the lost spirituality of earth love. The catch-all exploiting of this narrative reveals some of the nonparticipative problems that appear to have turned the dream of earth-love into an nightmare of confused theory and institutional vested interests.

## **INDIGENOUS WISDOM**

### **Background**

The idea of indigenous wisdom is a fairly recent theme that has swept the world. It emerged as a challenge to American society amongst oppressed native American peoples and also amongst other aboriginal groups in Australia and elsewhere. A key event that is widely quoted in environmental education circles is the address of Chief Seattle. This was apparently written by a minister of religion of European descent who was making an appeal on behalf of the indigenous peoples of North America. At the time they were being swept aside and destroyed by the colonists and his appeal was written within the prevailing notion of the 'noble-savage,' a 'civilising' theme that emerged to drive the 'conquest and liberation' of the non-christian 'heathen savages' of other lands. This orientation has now been inverted to become a call from the oppressed indigenous peoples for an acknowledgement of a lost spirituality of Mother Earth to which they claim custodianship.

### **A synthesis of global spiritualism and indigenous wisdom.**

In South Africa the noble-savage has been a theme of both apartheid and the struggle for liberation. The origins and 'truth' of these social themes need to be carefully thought through or unfortunate errors can be made. An example of a recent error is to be found in Opie (1994) *Awakening the Sleeper: The Dawn Years*. Here the abstract and nonconsultative treatment of indigenous knowledge in the rain dance activity has led to unfortunate errors that some indigenous people find perplexing. The authors appear to have taken the North American idea of a rain dance (Opie and Schuil, 1993:36) as a universal indigenous practice. Its application as an environmental education activity in South Africa is, however, not compatible with the social reality of Nguni peoples who do not have a rain-dance tradition. Within Nguni traditions, young children did not dance at the fire but watched the adults and were told stories.

One must question how this dancing activity and its accompanying 'earthy music' will contribute to socially meaningful learning and an awareness of the importance of water for survival.

Similar questions might well be asked about some of the assumptions underpinning the majority of the activities in the books. Many of these activities are already widely used in environmental education in North America, Europe, South Africa and elsewhere for that matter. Most are useful and exciting but this is somewhat diminished when the logic of the series imbues them with 'earth awareness messages' for a sequential progression towards the desired state of earth-love. Many of these earth awareness messages are, however, simply compelling snippets (p.85), common sense ideas (p.49), practical notes to teachers (p.132) or interesting facts (p.74).

The reality is that the apparent logic of the earth love messages is non-existent despite the claim that the 'earth awareness message' bridges the gap between the theoretical base of *The Dawn Years* and the applied activities of the book (Opie & Schuil, 1993:14). The earth-love logic for the sequential inclusion of each activity is simply not there. This is the case for the claimed unfolding structure of the series (Opie, 1992:xiv; Opie & Schuil, 1993:10) and for the continuity of earth awareness messages as they are grouped within the conceptual clusters of earth love education (imagination, sensory experience and discovery experience).

A way to test this would be to photocopy a sample of activities from the books. Cut off the listed skills and earth awareness statement and then try to sort the activities into the conceptual clusters of ages or stages. The results will speak for themselves. What we found is a set of interesting and potentially useful activities that had been dressed up in an indefensible and incoherent theory of earth love education. Our conclusion was to keep the activities and the idea of earth love.

## SOME CONCLUSIONS

As the review process gathered momentum within the documentary evidence of syllabus, books and research, the whole earth-love theory emerged as some monstrous myth. It appears to have been shaped on narrow ideals within processes that have disregarded many of the participative principles of environmental education. It is increasingly difficult to account for this grand plan as anything other

than good intentions somehow lost within a missionary zeal and the commercial potential of the field. This difficulty is compounded by the apparent alliance of author and a state agency on a quest to implement this earth-love orientation even if it has meant having to circumvent the structures that have been established to negotiate the reconstruction of education in South Africa.

This review arose out of the need to clarify environmental education following the disputed issues of process, orientation and substance within the core syllabus proposal of the Council for the Environment. Clarifying a research orientation and grappling with the web of complex claims and shifting orientations within the emerging theory of earth-love education has been very difficult. The idea that this review may be divisive or in some way damaging to environmental education must be contested. In the long term, what could be more damaging than an undisputed core syllabus founded upon an untenable universal logical sequence to construct earth-love.

To many environmental educators, the fundamental notion for awakening earth love is beyond question. The syllabus and its underpinning theory claim to encompass these ideals of holism, sustainability, the crafting of earth love and community empowerment. Under scrutiny, however, the rationale has little substance and departs from the very ideals to which it claims to subscribe. In particular, the tragedy that there is little correspondence between the holistic and participatory ideals of environmental education and the construction and enactment of this grand theory is cause for reflection.

What one is left with is little more than an untenable eclectic blend of ideas and a morass of questionable transformations. Exposed within this are questionable ethics and a religious zeal / institutional self-interest that appear to have transformed the utopian dream into an eclectic nightmare of untenable positions and theories. It may be only of small consolation that theories come and go but the spiritual wonder of nature and the love of Mother Earth will remain a compelling synthesis that is central to all good education.

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