Nourishing Pedagogy: Community Book Projects as Place-Based Collaborations

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Jaimey Facchin, Saskia Ebejer, Adam Gowen, Paul Chandler (University of Wollongong Batemans Bay, Australia)

This case study centers around projects instigated by the University of Wollongong's Batemans Bay campus which engaged other community entities in collaboration to produce a cultural and educational resource in book form. These projects occurred between 2017 and 2019 with more planned for the future. While this work is not a how-to guide, the analysis contained within will allow a broad application of principles in other contexts to increase community engagement and collaboration. The broad principles for success of such projects are identified as Place, Relationships, and Communication. These key elements are evaluated from a researcher as participant perspective and the inter-play between these crucial elements in an educational framework is described as 'Nourishing Pedagogy' a reference to Deborah Bird Roses' (1996) seminal work 'Nourishing Terrains'. Anthony McKnight's (2017) conceptualisation of 'Country as Teacher' as a framework in which both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can learn from Country was a crucial element as the On Country Learning (OCL) experiences (Jackson-Barrett & Lee-Hammond, 2018) were the primary sites where the 'Nourishing Pedagogy' practice was manifest. While there are many factors that contributed to the success of the projects it was clear that the privileging of Aboriginal perspectives and the yielding of institutional power, taking the form of the decampment of institutional buildings for the purpose of participating in the projects, was critical.