Educational institutions play an instrumental role in social and political change, and are responsible for the environmental and social ethics of their institutional practices. The essays in this volume critically examine scholarly research practices in the age of the Anthropocene, and ask what accountability educators and researchers have in ‘righting’ their relationship to the environment. The volume further calls attention to the geographical, financial, legal and political barriers that might limit scholarly dialogue by excluding researchers from participating in traditional modes of scholarly conversation. As such, Right Research is a bold invitation to the academic community to rigorous self-reflection on what their research looks like, how it is conducted, and how it might be developed so as to increase accessibility and sustainability, and decrease carbon footprint. The volume follows a three-part structure that bridges conceptual and practical concerns: the first section challenges our assumptions about how sustainability is defined, measured and practiced; the second section showcases artist-researchers whose work engages with the impact of humans on our environment; while the third section investigates how academic spaces can model eco-conscious behaviour. This timely volume responds to an increased demand for environmentally sustainable research, and is outstanding not only in its interdisciplinarity, but its embrace of non-traditional formats, spanning academic articles, creative acts, personal reflections and dialogues. Right Research will be a valuable resource for educators and researchers interested in developing and hybridizing their scholarly communication formats in the face of the current climate crisis.

Cover image by Leanne Olson, The Clay at Ryley, CC-BY-NC-ND

Cover design by Emilie St-Hilaire.
From the small ass farm where I live with a multispecies family in the U.S. Pacific Northwest, I am excited to share a short video,\textsuperscript{14} which illustrates certain ways that the Rural Alchemy Workshop (or R.A.W.) practice explores questions arising within this larger conversation. Borrowing Donna Haraway’s guiding question, ‘Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?’, this barnyard-bound performance practice for the past eighteen years has investigated the question, ‘Who and what do I kiss when I kiss my ass?’—with the caveat that one’s ‘ass’ is never what one thinks it is.\textsuperscript{15} And of course, the gift of this question resides in the fact that there is no one simple or respectful way to answer it, as such. What matters is the practice of asking it, over and over again, in loving respect, humble wonder, and slow deliberation, and in every way imaginable... and then some.

Grounded in webs of care, desire, uncertainty, and fraught complexities of intraspecies intimacies, this little video illustrates aspects of the R.A.W. practice I draw from to address important questions posed by this wonderful gathering of thinkers and makers around questions of Art and/in The Anthropocene, beginning with:

\textit{What is it we hope to sustain?}

As I was pondering this question in the context of the discussion, the final passage from Cormac McCarthy’s post-apocalyptic novel \textit{The Road} came to mind. Actually, the last word, which is ‘mystery’. In case you haven’t read it, or don’t remember it exactly, the passage goes like this:

Once there were brook trout in the streams in the mountains. You could see them standing in the amber current where the white edges of their fins wimpled softly in the flow. They smelled of moss in your hand. Polished and muscular and torsional. On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again. In the

\textsuperscript{14} See https://vimeo.com/user41106277/review/486976557/e3e20bd20b.

\textsuperscript{15} Donna J. Haraway, \textit{When Species Meet} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 3.
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deep glens where they lived all things were older than man and they
hummed of mystery.\textsuperscript{16}

The sense of what the earth has lost because of human extractions and
overblown hungers is profound and gut-wrenching. But also, in the
midst of this stark evocation of loss, I find shimmers of hope in the last
line, the last word. Because the mystery, old as it is, is always here. So if I
had to narrow my response to the question ‘what do I want my practice
and worldly actions to sustain?’ to a word, what I call up is this: mystery.

We are aware of devastated earthly places, where untold lives are
plundered and erased or pushed to the edges of extinction by human
activities and effluents. But even in these places, mystery survives,
because enmeshed lives are always full of untold stories and unreckoned
possibilities.

Reckoning with the so-called Anthropocene demands humility
in a variety of forms. Art provides vital tools for honoring what we
cannot know by empirical means, or sometimes grasp at all. Embracing
indeterminacy, performance in particular makes vital spaces in which to
cultivate humility and various kinds of joyful unknowing and passionate
wonder. By the same token, such spaces may actively RESIST dominant
and often devastating assumptions of growth and progress. Alongside
more overtly political forms of resistance, artful openings allow us
to slowly but steadily reimagine becomings within subtle meshes
of mystery—maps and mazes, where we wander and invite others to
wander with us, following nameless passions and tracing hopes for
lively futures, full of mysterious mud and microbes and mammals and
untold others.

On Ecological Forms

I am immensely grateful to all of the artists, critics, curators and
others who have cultivated practical spaces that allow artists to fully
embody, explore and live messily inside the frames of our deepest
questions, quandaries, and passions. Guided by these practices and
theories, I can both creatively and critically dwell inside of what Natalie

Loveless frames as an ecology of care in the R.A.W. barnyard. In the logic of art practice that formally embraces complex interconnection and care in order to do purposeful and responsible imagining within specific naturecultures, it’s all ecological. I most admire situated but wildly expansive art practices that resonate with Deborah Bird Rose’s observation that ecologies may not just be more complex than we think they are, they may be more complex than we CAN think.

I would call the R.A.W. an ecological art practice, not because it considers multispecies matters but rather because, more than anything else, it questions the wisdom and value of making certain distinctions between forms of life, versus the value of sustained attention to interdependencies. Creative practices seek and often find new ways of thinking and perceiving. What is most exciting to me is when we find unforeseen modes of becoming right in our own backyards, entangled bodies and beloved muzzle tongues.

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18 Deborah Bird Rose, Reports from a Wild Country: Ethics for Decolonization (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2004), p. 188.