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Editors

Mapping Environmental Issues in the City

Arts and Cartography Cross Perspectives

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Chapter 9

A Post-Naturalist Field Kit: Tools For The Embodied Exploration Of Social Ecologies

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Abstract

For nearly two hundred years, the figure of the naturalist—the enthusiastic observer of birds, soils, insects, plants, and animals—set the bar for dedicated, non-professional scholarship of the non-human world. With his sketchbook, butterfly net, binoculars, and field guides, the naturalist went “into the field” to learn nature’s secrets through patient observation. But recent scholarship in the sciences and humanities has revealed that “the field” cannot be considered apart from the human world that shapes and imagines it. Taking its cue from the study of social nature, *A Post-Naturalist Field Kit* is an art project that updates the figure of the naturalist for the exploration of post-natural urban landscapes. The project includes artifacts for exploring environmental issues in the city—from specimen jars to do-it-yourself air quality monitors and lead contamination tests—along with activity cards that refuse to draw lines between social, economic, and environmental issues. Drawing on Fluxus game kits and recent environmental art, “A Post-Naturalist Field Kit” offers tools for the embodied exploration of urban social ecologies. This article describes and contextualizes the project in light of relevant areas of creative practice and geographical thought.

I stretch my arm awkwardly, reaching with a metal tweezers to scratch and scrape hardened ash from the sill of a window bricked over long ago. The highway roars and trembles not twenty meters away and about as far overhead. The ash resists, turned nearly to stone by decades of indirect moisture, freeze-thaw cycles, and drifting pollen from the milkweed, chicory, and Queen Anne's Lace clamoring for a narrow band of sunlight between this former factory and the raised highway. At last a chunk breaks off and skips to the ground. I stoop to retrieve it. It is greyer and grittier than the dust of the unpaved lot. I pop the hardened ash into a specimen jar, scrawl "780 St-Remi" on a scrap of tracing paper, and place the jar and label into the wooden case at my feet.

I'm a post-naturalist, and this wooden case is my field kit. It contains physical and conceptual tools for exploring Montreal's post-natural urban landscape in the working-class neighborhood of Saint-Henri. By "post-natural," I do not only mean that the city has so modified the ecology of the land that talking about nature is meaningless, although that certainly seems true. Rather, by "post-natural" I also mean to suggest that the traditional *concept* of nature is now somehow untenable, something that we can no longer use as a foil for human activity—if indeed we



Figure 9.1 "A Post-Naturalist Field Kit for Saint-Henri," 2010.

ever could. In this view, the industrial city is not so much a place where nature has been banished, overcome, or destroyed. Nor are the plants flourishing in the band of sunlight between factory and highway emblems of nature triumphant. Instead, this remote and unglamorous corner of Montreal is a strategic site where the nature-culture dualism—a structuring distinction of modernity—falls apart upon close scrutiny (Latour 1993). What replaces it is a diffuse network of indeterminate interconnection called ‘social nature’ in which the city’s air quality, poverty rates, nesting birds, automobile traffic, native plants, manicured parks, lead-contaminated soil, and condo construction all have a role. “A Post-Naturalist Field Kit” is a toolbox for exploring these interconnections as they play out in the Saint-Henri neighborhood of Montreal.

9.1 A Post-Naturalist Field Kit

My toolbox is housed in a pine case that harkens back to the field kits and butterfly boxes of the classic 18th and 19th century naturalists. Inside, the case is divided into various lined compartments containing tools and items to assist with post-naturalist fieldwork. Some of these are the specimen jars, tweezers, collection envelopes, and magnifying glasses that a naturalist might use, but the post-naturalist is also equipped with wands to test for lead contamination, wooden cards to fashion do-it-yourself particulate air quality monitors, and tracing paper to collect rubbings of the unique textures produced by decaying urban infrastructure. The centerpiece of the kit is a suite of ten, double-sided cards. The front of each card is printed with an open-ended question about the neighborhood, while the reverse side provides three suggested activities—some more practical than others—that might begin to answer the question. The kit is rounded out by a brochure providing background information into the history and current politics in the neighborhood and a map to guide exploration.

Although “A Post-Naturalist Field Kit” treads on serious territory, the instruction cards’ questions and suggested activities are oblique and at times tongue-in-cheek. The questions intentionally blur the boundaries between natural, social, and political issues and suggest that they all may be linked. One question asks, “How is the neighbourhood’s social ecology linked to other (eco)systems?” while another queries, “How has unnatural selection shaped neighbourhood evolution?” The front of the cards also contain quotations from 19th and 20th century intellectuals too rarely considered together, such as Charles Darwin and Hannah Arendt, Rachel Carson and Walter Benjamin. These quotations amplify the ecological or socio-political connotations of questions and suggest that contemporary conditions have deep historical roots. For example, a question about food sources in the neigh-

borhood is complemented by Karl Marx's critique of industrial agriculture, originally published in *Capital* in 1867. The activities on the reverse side are similarly oblique and contain a mixture of the actually doable and exercises meant to remain thought experiments. For instance, the card about food suggests, "Walk the alleys and parking lots behind restaurants and supermarkets. What and whom do you meet there? How is excess food disposed of? Are the dumpsters locked or unlocked?" By contrast, a card investigating the economic aspects of environmental issues gives the following assignment: "Stand by a highway entrance on a summer's day. Note the number and type of cars that pass in an hour and if their windows are rolled down or up. Express the average Blue Book value of cars with their windows rolled up as a multiple of the average Blue Book value of cars with their windows rolled down." This absurd math problem need not be actually completed to prompt reflection on the ways that affluence shields people from the dirt, noise, and pollution of the roadway.

"A Post-Naturalist Field Kit" draws on the legacy of twentieth century avant-garde movements like Situationism and Fluxus, and well as more recent community-based environmental art. The Situationist *dérive* was a technique of urban exploration and group research that employed wandering on foot to become attune to the physical, social, and psychological effects of the spaces traversed (Debord 1958). Drawing on artistic antecedents such as Dada and Surrealism and the chance music of John Cage, Fluxus artists used games to promote a spirit of playfulness and encourage a celebration of the everyday. Fluxus games included kits containing objects and instructions, decks of custom-made or modified cards, and modified board games that were often impossible to play with the instructions provided. While my kit treads on more serious territory than Fluxus and is more directive than Situationist *dérives*, the box is visually influenced by Fluxus games and channels Debordian drifting. It is also influenced by contemporary projects promoting spatial exploration, such as Julian Bleecker and Dawn Lazzi's "Drift Deck" or the Los Angeles Urban Rangers' "Field Guide to the American Road Trip" (Los Angeles Urban Rangers 2006, Bleecker and Lazzi 2008). I drew on the multidisciplinary methods developed at the intersections of art, architecture, and urbanism by groups such as the Center for Urban Pedagogy in New York and X-Field at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in Australia (Center for Urban Pedagogy N.D., X-Field 2010). With this range of inspiration, the content of my cards and use of the objects in the kit remain relatively open-ended; although the suggested activities were developed from research into the neighborhood, they could be pursued in almost any large city in North America. As art, they suggest a playful *method* of urban inquiry, rather than specific content to be learned or conclusions to be drawn.

"A Post-Naturalist Field Kit" promotes a mode of inquiry into urban ecological issues that is attune to the ironies and ambiguities of the post-natural condition and yet utterly sincere in the desire to understand urban environmental

QUESTION THREE

How must the neighbourhood's future contend with its past?

There is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one. Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a weak Messianic power, a power to which the past has a claim. That claim cannot be settled cheaply.

— Walter Benjamin, 1939

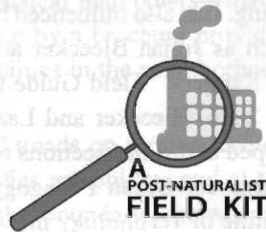


Figure 9.2 Sample card for post-naturalist exploration, front.

ACTIVITIES FOR QUESTION THREE

A. Visit one or more of the contaminated sites identified on the map. What do you see, hear, and smell there? Whom do you meet along the way? What sorts of development seem to be in store for the area? Note the types and conditions of plants, animals, and buildings near the site. Ask a fellow pedestrian what they know of contamination at the site.

B. Find signs of the re-use of former industrial facilities, including reclamation by plants and animals, adaptation to new industries, and the management of habitat for the affluent. Which pattern appears to be most common in different parts of the neighbourhood? Who seems to be driving the process?

C. Walk along and beneath the infrastructures of the 19th and 20th centuries—canals, railroads, and highways. What uses and users do you find there? Imagine the infrastructures of the future and how they will be used.

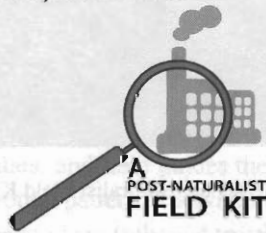


Figure 9.3 Sample card for post-naturalist exploration, back.

issues. Grounding the project to the Saint-Henri area of Montreal is the brochure describing the neighborhood's history, economics, demographics and environmental issues. This background information no doubt colors how the cards are read and affects the activities to be chosen, but it also acknowledges how landscape—even an obviously constructed, urban one—“has the effect of making invisible the operations that made it possible” (Mitchell 1994, 2). In this way, the kit acknowledges that embodied exploration, while necessary, is not in itself sufficient for experiencing multiple dimensions of urban space. Language can provide the contextual knowledge that makes space legible to the explorer. In this way, the cards suggest that a mixture of embodied exploration of physical space, textual research, and the sort of careful observation over time that marked the methods of the classical naturalists may now lead to discoveries about the post-natural city.



Figure 9.4 “A Post-Naturalist Field Kit for Saint-Henri,” 2010 (detail).

On the Post-Natural

Thirty-five years ago, the cultural critic Raymond Williams wrote, “Nature is perhaps the most complex word in the [English] language” (Williams 1983, 219). Since then, nature only got more complicated. The test-tube babies of Williams’s time foreshadowed ever-advancing technological capacities to enhance, endanger, modify, and simulate natural processes through industry and technology. Against this backdrop, corporations have shifted from denying the validity of almost all concerns about the environment to embracing the most marketable elements of an

environmental agenda as their own (Katz 1998, Rogers 2010). Responses to these changing circumstances in public discourse often involve appeals to nature that are highly contradictory and often politically charged. If everywhere nature is under threat, then it has never been more culturally resonant.

Rejecting the more apocalyptic pronouncements about the end of nature (while taking ecological crisis seriously), scholars from philosophy, cultural studies, geography, and science studies have developed a rich body of inquiry into nature as a social construction. The wide-ranging literature of what has been 'socio-ecology' historicizes nature as a concept; deconstructs the political and ecological consequences of particular notions of nature; explores how nature is produced discursively and materially through human action; and suggests that the contemporary crisis of nature is an opportunity to rethink environmental politics as inextricably linked to science, technology, race, class, gender, capitalism, and democracy (Haraway 1991; Wilson 1991; Latour 1993; Soper 1995; Harvey 1996; Braun and Castree 1998; Whatmore 2002; Latour 2004; Smith 2008; Morton 2010). While a review of this literature is impossible here, these authors take a constructivist approach to nature, influenced by deconstruction and post-structuralism. Although nature has long been viewed as culture's other—the authentic "everything else" to human activity (Soper 1995), sociologist and science studies scholar Bruno Latour historicizes this nature-culture binary by positing it as product of modernity, which depended ideologically on a stark separation between nature (the real), science (the discursive), and culture (the social), even if in practice it produced inescapably hybrid formations that it immediately disavowed (Latour 1993). In this view, 'nature' becomes a material as well as discursive formation produced by complex inter-relationships between the material world of organisms, human beliefs and perceptions, and practices that shape, mediate, and, indeed, remake both humans and the non-human world (Castree and Braun 2001).

In many ways, the figure of the naturalist is a product of the structuring nature-culture binary, and he (and the most celebrated naturalists were usually men) can be seen as one of these formations whose actual hybridity was constantly suppressed. With his sketchbook, butterfly net, binoculars, and field guides the naturalist went "into the field" to learn nature's secrets through patient observation. For some, this became a near-spiritual pursuit. "It is blessed to lean fully and trustingly on Nature, to experience, by taking to her a pure heart and unartificial mind, the infinite tenderness and power of her love," John Muir wrote in 1872 (Bade 1924 vol. 1, 325). How the naturalist's tools of observation—the binoculars and field guides most obviously but also practices of observation and Romantic-era notions of nature—affected the observed and the observer were rarely acknowledged. If many naturalists ended up calling for a more holistic ecological view that would consider human beings part of (rather than commanding dominion over) nature, they usually nonetheless saw culture as a corrupting artifice that must be shed to achieve a proper union with the

non-human world.

By contrast, socio-ecology proceeds from the observation that “humanity’s relationship with nature, in all its permutations, is ineluctable and inherently subversive of the nature-society dualism. From this perspective, human intervention in nature is thus neither “unnatural” nor something to fear or decry. ...[W]hat is at stake is not preserving the last vestiges of the pristine, or protecting the sanctity of the “natural” body, but building critical perspectives that focus attention on how social natures are transformed, by which actors, for whose benefit, and with what social and ecological consequences” (Castree & Braun 1998, 4). In other words, sidestepping the nature-culture binary and embracing the hybrid character of nature-science-culture *assemblages* opens up the possibility of intellectual and political action that is far more complex, inclusive, and justice-oriented than traditional conservation work.

Like many critical positions influenced by post-structuralism, social nature theory has been accused of destructive relativism by environmentalists who believe for political and ethical reasons that nature must be a stable, truthful category of analysis independent of human needs and desires (Soulé and Lease 1995, Deluca 2007). However, it takes seriously questions of social justice, listening carefully to the experience of activist-thinkers in the environmental justice movement for whom romantic and racialized ideas about nature’s purity and isolation long impeded efforts to get ecological issues in urban areas—not to mention indigenous peoples’ land rights—taken seriously by white, middle-class conservation organizations (Sandler and Pezzullo 2007). Yet social nature theory is not only about adding environmental health and urban sustainability to the agenda of conservation organizations—a process which is well underway (Deluca 2007). Rather, it attempts to understand how the constitution of human-nature relationships are bound up in the totality of the social order—how they are organized and made productive within capitalist modernity and, crucially, how social, political, and economic power relations create uneven and often highly unjust socio-ecological conditions (Heynen et al 2010). Social nature therefore provides a framework for considering how ecological concerns exceed what are conventionally thought of as ‘environmental issues.’ In this view, housing policy is as much about ecology as energy usage; the routes homeless people use to move through the city become as important to understand as the migration patterns of endangered birds.

While indebted to the experiences of grassroots movements for some of its observations, social nature theory remains rooted in the academy and relies on sophisticated and sometimes highly theoretical arguments about the nature of capitalism and social power. As such, it is not particularly accessible to non-specialists, even as its central arguments are potentially transformative. What would it take for social nature theory’s observations to be grasped by non-theorists, including artists, planners, community members, and even high school students? As an artist, I was

less interested in attempting to 'translate' this work into layman's terms than in designing experiences in which people might begin to piece together a connective, justice-oriented environmentalism for themselves. Text could and would have to be part of this process, since many environmental issues are invisible and must be explained. But learning new approaches for looking at and inhabiting the city is also necessary for the development of a more connective ecological consciousness. I wanted to employ social nature theory in "A Post-Naturalist Field Kit" to help others to think about urban ecology in an expansive, systemic, and justice-oriented way.

9.2 Developing the Field Kit

In spring 2010, I was invited to participate in an interdisciplinary workshop on art and cartography to be held at Concordia University in September. The event took a novel approach: provide artists and cartographers with a shared database of information on urban environmental issues from which to develop new projects. I had been in the early stages of conceiving an inquiry game kit for the exploration of social nature and urban environmental issues; the opportunity to use very specific GIS data in my research was an unexpected boon. Over the summer, I began to explore data using my self-taught ArcMap skills. Very quickly, the Saint-Henri and Point-Saint-Charles neighborhoods in southwest Montreal stood out as areas that had a disproportionate share of contaminated sites and much higher than average instances of cancer, low birth weight, and respiratory mortality. Some strategic



Figure 9.5 Cracks on the façade of highway-adjacent building in Saint-Henri.

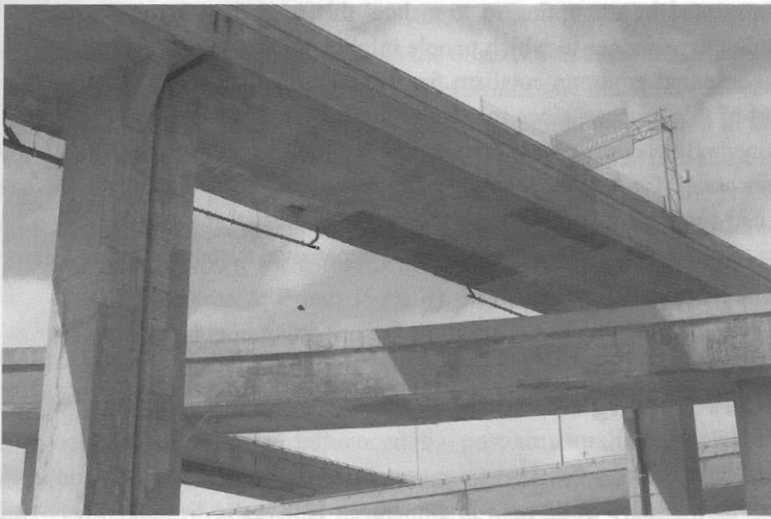


Figure 9.6 Turcot Interchange on the Ville-Marie Autoroute in Saint-Henri, Montreal.



Figure 9.7 McGill University multi-billion dollar hospital complex under construction between working-class Saint-Henri and affluent Westmount.

use of Google revealed that Saint-Henri was facing a major highway reconstruction that threatened to obliterate dozens of homes in this close-knit, working class community. At the same time, gentrification was a growing concern, as was the impact on the area of McGill's hospital mega-project. This trio of issues had made the neighborhood a favorite topic of study for socially-engaged urban planning classes, and a wealth of information about the neighborhood's physical character-

istics, demographics, environmental problems, and history was therefore available online. Without leaving my desk in Iowa, I could begin to construct a field kit about Saint-Henri.

Of course, if my aim was to create a toolkit for the embodied and social exploration of urban ecologies, then relying exclusively on data and text sources was inappropriate. After creating a prototype of two cards to offer as an example, I began writing and calling people who work or live in the neighborhood. Some of these were cold calls; others were referrals from artist-activist friends with connections to Montreal. I asked these contacts to share their perceptions of the area's environmental and social issues, and I was impressed by the generosity with which people shared their time, experiences, and opinions. Most respondents referred me to someone else, and I began to get a picture of the various community organizations and citizens' committees. The highway and its proposed reconstruction were immediately and universally identified as the most pressing environmental issues facing the community, and the area's health problems, dangerous traffic patterns, and physical and economic isolation from the rest of the city were all described as related to the highway. Other concerns included a lack of green space, an urban heat island effect, inadequate grocery stores, and dilapidated housing stock. I began to create general activity cards inspired by these responses, my Internet research and the GIS data, and I constructed the box and selected the tools for "A Post-Naturalist Field Kit."

I arrived five days early for the workshop in order to spend many hours walking Saint-Henri and meeting community members, planners and activists face-to-face. I spent three days wandering, often alone, practicing on foot the visual and sensory exploration of ordinary landscapes advocated by artist-forebears like the Situationists, as well as landscape historian John Stilgoe (Stilgoe 1998). Although the kit as an object was complete by the time I arrived in Montreal, the cards and the brochure were edited to reflect what I learned on the ground. For example, a longtime resident took me on a tour and pointed out that tree size on residential streets roughly corresponds to the extent of a block's gentrification. The first streets to gentrify were the ones with the best housing—housing that had been provided to the supervisors of the factories that once employed Saint-Henri's working class. The supervisors of a century ago liked trees, and so do the lawyers and architects trickling into the neighborhood today. This observation inspired a suggested activity on the second round of cards. A card originally asking about railroad noise, dirt, and damage was similarly edited to include highways, based on observations and conversations in the neighborhood.

This iterative, consultative approach in developing the field kit was informed by the mixed methods used by contemporary artists working in the overlapping territory variously labeled community-based, critical, littoral, relational or social



Figure 9.8 Condo conversions in former industrial building on eastern edge of Saint-Henri, near the Lachine Canal.



Figure 9.9 Air pollution on window ledge of highway-adjacent building in Saint-Henri.

practice art. The current iteration of “A Post-Naturalist Field Kit” is not a collaborative, community-based project—the short time I spent in Montreal precluded meaningful dialogue over time, and the conception of the piece is mine specifically. However, elements of the discourse on community-based practice influenced my approach to the prototype I produced and have suggested directions for future projects. Curators like Mary Jane Jacob, critics like Grant Kester and artists like

Suzanne Lacy have advocated that artists working with real-world issues collaborate with and be responsive to the concerns of the communities most affected, eliciting transformative aesthetic expression based on locally-rooted knowledge (Jacob 1993, Lacy 1995, Kester 2004). Striking a somewhat less celebratory note, Miwon Kwon and Claire Bishop have separately cautioned against the artist sidestepping thorny questions of authorship and issues of artistic autonomy in order to present ‘the community’s voice’ as if it were a transparent, unified whole. (Kwon 2002, Bishop 2006). Although these figures often disagree—sometimes strenuously—over the meaning of ‘art’ as a discipline in this emerging area of practice and how or if artists should strive to be socially useful, elements of their critiques of site-specificity, relationality, and collaboration influenced me to seek out the feedback of local residents and organizers while the broad conceptualization of the project remained my own. I cooperated with local individuals and organizations without presuming to present their experience or obscuring my position as an outsider, and I communicated my hope to use future iterations of the project to more concretely and broadly increase awareness of socio-ecological issues in the neighborhood.



Figure 9.10 Workshop participants drifting toward the highway.

The Field Kit in the Field

“A Post-Naturalist Field Kit” saw its first public fieldwork on the concluding day of the Art and Cartography workshop. I brought workshop participants to the Saint-Henri metro station, distributed cards and brochures to groups of four, and directed them to walk about one kilometer to the parking lot of 780 St-Remi – a building slated for destruction under the government’s plan for highway reconstruction.



Figure 9.11 Workshop participants with Pierre Brisset at the Turcot Interchange..

Because the cards' activities did not necessarily match the route we were taking or the available time, each group was also asked to pay particular attention to one feature along the route—green space, traffic patterns, smells, and sounds. In the parking lot of 780 St-Remi, workshop participants were guided to the highway overpass by an architect who had worked with the citizens' mobilization against the highway proposal to develop an alternative that emphasized more sustainable transportation practices and improved quality of life in Saint-Henri without demolishing homes. We then walked to a collective garden to learn from a neighborhood resident about grassroots efforts to improve health, quality of life, and the environment in the neighborhood. I demonstrated the field kit, and everyone discussed what we had noticed on the journey from the metro station to the garden.

Workshop participants were overwhelmingly positive in their response to the field activities. After sitting in the twelfth floor of a downtown building for two days, traveling to a neighborhood far off the tourist maps, feeling the early autumn sun, moving our legs, and smelling an ever-changing mix of cooking, marijuana, and car exhaust began to enact the exploration of urban environmental concerns that we'd spent half the week discussing. The sensory and social co-research, anchored by texts to create context and gentle directives to prompt observation, seemed to strike a chord.

The field kit as an object was less successful in the field. Although aesthetically pleasing, it proved cumbersome and somewhat heavy to carry. It had been designed to echo the historical naturalists' tools, but a contemporary audience accustomed to molded plastic and foam seemed reluctant to use or touch so precious a hand-made object. I concluded that it was more suited to be a gallery piece, more useful

for imaginative than physical post-naturalist expeditions. I hope to revise the kit concept into something better suited to replication and more expedition-ready. The cards themselves have already been exhibited in a gallery, which I hope to be only one site among many where the project might ultimately live.

This field kit was always conceived as a prototype, and I would like to modify it to act as a self-pedagogical tool for high school and college students as well as interested community members. Unfortunately, attempts to continue working with contacts in Saint-Henri have proven difficult. Although the province's plans for the highway reconstruction appeared to be on hold in September, the Quebec government has since unveiled its counter-proposal for the highway. With scarcely a gesture to citizens' and the city's demands for decreased automobile traffic, more public transportation, and no evictions, the province's latest plan would marginally increase traffic to 300,000 vehicles per day, do little to build public transportation in the near future, and cause over a hundred residents to lose their homes (Riga 2010). This announcement has left neighborhood activists and their institutional partners scrambling to respond, and an art project by someone in Iowa quite understandably and appropriately recedes in the order of priorities. While the project remains firmly grounded in the territory of art right now, what I learned from working on it will inform related work that may find meaning in other spaces, as well.

9.3 Conclusion

Our work grows from a belief that the power of imagination is central to the practice of democracy, and that the work of governing must engage the dreams and visions of citizens. (The Center for Urban Pedagogy) believes in the legibility of the world around us. What can we learn by investigation? By learning how to investigate, we train ourselves to change what we see.

Center for Urban Pedagogy

It is easy to doubt what creative projects contribute to neighborhoods and grassroots organizations struggling with economic, environmental, and social justice issues. What is at stake in community-based work is so much more concrete and palpably immediate: did the family lose its home or not? Are more children dying of asthma or fewer? Yet it is a commonplace complaint by community organizations that their mandates, funding sources, and chronic understaffing force issues to be addressed in a piecemeal, often reformist way, rather than with the sort of expansive thinking that tries to understand intersections between complex issues that often shade into philosophical and ethical questions, rather than technical or tactical ones. Really contending with the recognition of a socio-natural world entails a set of perceptual and political transformations that exceed what community groups, NGOs, and

governments can do.

“Thinking the ecological thought is difficult,” writes literary scholar Timothy Morton. “It involves becoming open, radically open—open forever, without the possibility of closing again. Studying art provides a platform, because the environment is partly a matter of perception. Art forms have something to tell us about the environment, because they can make us question reality. I would like to stay for as long as possible in an open, questioning mode” (Morton, 2010, 8). The transverse strategies of art—the ones that teach us how to investigate and re-imagine the world—become vitally important. Interdisciplinary creative practice may have far more to do with traditional art forms like drawing—which largely remain the foundation of a young artist’s education—than they might seem at first glance. Drawing classes are first and foremost lessons in looking, in seeing beyond the expected, conventional, stylized idea of an object so as to view its unique, contingent form. If interdisciplinary art projects like “A Post-Naturalist Field Kit” use language more than imagery to direct and inform the observer, it is because what we hope to see is not visible to the eye alone.

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