Cover Page

Story Development Through Fieldwork: Extending Animation Pedagogy and Practice

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ABSTRACT:

This article concerns two field trips into the Sydney hinterland designed to investigate how fieldwork can be a valuable pedagogical practice for animation development and study. The project, titled *Story Prospecting*, was designed to examine whether framing fieldwork practises from disciplines such as ethnography could be beneficial for animators in the early development of original characters and stories. This article describes the project in detail, explains its rationale and tells what we learned over two expeditions in 2016 and 2017.

KEYWORDS: Animation Pedagogy, Fieldwork, Ethnography, Autoethnography,

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1   ABSTRACT

This paper expands upon the authors' presentation entitled *Story Prospecting*, accepted to the 2020 *Society for Animation Studies* annual conference (Gidney & McGrath 2020). This paper explores our efforts to expand our pedagogical practice by integrating more ambitious fieldwork activities into early project development (preproduction). As teachers, our goal is to develop participatory activities that leverage interdisciplinary techniques to help students find inspiration and source material. The endeavour involved two three-day expeditions to abandoned historical sites, which served as sources for inspiration and study. We had two objectives: connecting students with interdisciplinary modes of investigation through fieldwork and enabling students to take their experiences into their evolving animation practice beyond the classroom. This paper outlines a model to use fieldwork in the early development of characters, worlds, and narrative fragments to challenge students' imagination. We wanted students to experiment with plausibility: "filling-in" gaps discovered across time, culture, narrative, and place. This paper discusses the significance of our approach in connecting practices found in social sciences, forensics and dramatic arts to the teaching and production of animation. Finally, this paper explores how creating the illusion of movement, as a fundamental precept in animation, resonates with a more general and transdisciplinary notion that evidence of movement equates to evidence of human experience. Moreover, prospecting for such evidence is of great value to animators as storytellers, artists and designers.

2   BACKGROUND

In a 2015 TED talk (Shiota 2015) Shuzo John Shiota described the Japanese principle of Kaizen, in which continual improvement underscores his approach to running *Polygon Pictures* in Tokyo. In this spirit, we continually seek better ways to work with students to develop their practice and originality as animators. Although the authors currently teach animation in separate design schools, the fieldwork discussed in this paper took place while we worked together at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). We remain highly motivated to develop a pedagogical practice that will equip students to become more emphatic authors of original and compelling work.

Upon reflection, it was apparent that the way we ask students to develop characters is through broad notions of research, including embodiment, iteration and reflection, echoed in other study fields. Actors have practised various character development methods since Stanislavski (Stilson 2005) and later Strasberg (McAllister 2018) in the 1930s. Journalists, social scientists, anthropologists, and ethnographers similarly seek to document and understand the human experience. Ethnographic research has blossomed into many

micro-disciplinary forms, including autoethnography, sensory ethnography, fictional ethnography, and visual ethnography. The concept of engaging with other disciplinary methodologies was exciting for us, and we set about to see how we might incorporate interdisciplinary practice to broaden our animation pedagogy.

In 2016 and 2017, we brought small groups of undergraduate students on a three-day teaching and research expedition to sites located in the Sydney hinterland. We designed activities to emphasise how a site's physicality is of value for inspiring both world and character design through experiences of emplacement and embodiment. Each journey's objective was to use evidence and inspiration found in these abandoned settlements as a vector to an imagined moment in time, with the goal that these clues may end up becoming a source for animation and character development. We chose Hill End and Newnes as examples of modern-day ghost towns and dubbed the expeditions "Story Prospecting". Hill End is a historic Australian gold rush town not unlike the infamous city of *Deadwood* from the so-named teledrama series. Unlike *Deadwood,* Newnes is more of a Victorian industrial experiment that went wrong, located deep in the Australian bush. Taking inspiration from the concept of the outdoor classroom and related pedagogy (Stewart 2008) (Beames, Higgins & Nicol 2012) (Jelmberg, Goodman, Bruenig 2009, p.4), we aimed to excite students and provoke interest through dramatic promotion and the promise of a visceral experience.

2.1 PRACTICE

Even in a pre-COVID world, we had found that students' investigative skills were increasingly reliant upon web-based search engines. Online search results had become too often the only evidence found while 'researching' a project. When the goal of a problem is to generate originality, this approach's homogenising effect in isolation was noticeably weak, and the depth of understanding shallow. Ideas often looked like a patchwork of incomplete and disconnected work weakly associated with keywords.

For some students from diverse cultural backgrounds, language skills can inhibit what we were seeking in their ideation and research work. We experimented with enabling creation to be entirely in the student's first language, with subtitles and transcription where necessary; however, this was not the complete answer; many still never went further than Google. Upon reflection, our cohort's more substantial work is generally underpinned by diverse research, continuous iteration, and engaging response to good source material. Source materials (books, articles, anecdotes, artefacts, artworks, films, interviews and personal stories) are the evidence, and fuel students can keep coming back to throughout the development process, particularly as they hit dead ends.

A practice of research and development by making physical records through journaling, drawing, recording, and collecting – fundamental to fieldwork practice found in other disciplines - seemed to be worth investigating as a solution to an exclusive overreliance upon Google.

2.2 PEDAGOGY

This paper discusses the pedagogical importance of field research and field practice for undergraduate students within the animation discipline, examining the limitations and outcomes of these experiences and the significance for students going forward in their careers.

Our pedagogical model is a problem-based approach and centres around bringing projects into a design studio for development and discussion. More than half of the projects are designed to be group activities: reflecting the highly collaborative nature of animation practice. In our current teaching model, animation skill development begins with drawing and observation work, a vital participatory foundation. Drawing is then complemented in design methods, animation studies and narrative investigation. As the curriculum moves along, the emphasis shifts toward character development, performance, world-building, aesthetics,

cinema literacy and narrative forms. We focus on character-driven animation practice as an essential foundation before segueing into non-narrative animation practice modes or emerging technologies.

Further, we understand that many students will have career paths that follow a trajectory toward studios' roles, which primarily require craft skills in animation. Only a minority of the cohort will move into careers as original content creators or academics. This aside, we initially encourage students to accept that they should develop their practice outside of a "day job" as a space to build their original projects as practising animators.

2.2.1   Character-Driven Animation: Creating better characters

John Lasseter presented his paper at SIGGRAPH (Lasseter 2001) that described an approach to character engagement with audiences emotionally: arguing that for an audience to feel an emotional attachment to a character they need to believe that each character is complex and capable of independent thought. Characters must be "thinking characters" whose thought is revealed through performance: both action and reaction. We use this simple resonant philosophy because it is practical, measurable, and understood by students.

2.2.2   Depth of Inquiry: Improving development

Denzin writes in *Interpretive Autoethnography* (Denzin 2017, p.4) about assumptions and performative aspects to story accounts and how to approach and give voice to such truths in a project.

> *"Persons are arbitrators of their own presence in the world, and they should have the last word on this problem. Our texts must always return to and reflect the words persons speak as they attempt to give meaning and shape to the lives they lead."*

As Denzin points out, finding authentic accounts – not necessarily objective or politically correct, nor sanitised in any way – are like performances in their own right. Inspiration from personal narratives that pertain to the research around a project is valuable across disciplinary activities. It should also be useful to the development of animated stories in the same way.

Ethnographic fieldwork activities, as discussed in Blommaert's beginner's guide (Blommaert & Jie 2018), (walking, observing, interviewing, recording, taking field notes, collecting rubbish, immersion in the site, and experiencing the activities of that time and place), capture valuable knowledge for character animators. The hope was that we could champion authentic experience as a model of enquiry and demonstrate this value for creative designers and storytellers.

An extended outdoor classroom experience as described in Jelmberg (Jelmberg, Goodman, Bruenig 2009), can reframe and challenge (animation) pedagogy: subverting the convenience of an animation studio and placing students in unfamiliar environments, and naturally expand the potential for originality. Field trips mandate a slow, non-digital primary experience which is difficult to recreate on a university campus.

3   APPROACH

We would journey "into the wild" to historic ghost towns peppered with accounts of curiosity, drama and mystery to illuminate the value of primary investigation and to unlock inspiration from finding physical

evidence. We also wanted students to be clear on embodiment as a concept by being present in a specific physical place. Tasks on-site encouraged students to explore and fossick for source material based upon initial research of people, events and places from the past. Students camped out while undertaking journaling, camera craft, audio field recording, storytelling and drone flying. Each day would be an immersive experience: walking through the landscape, mapping the locations visited and forming narratives of what "might have been". Student groups were asked to develop creative responses away from a computer screen's convenience without the formal high stakes of university assessment.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

This research paper's objective was to elevate the value of an experiential domain in early animation development and preproduction. In particular, we intended to bring into our teaching qualitative research methods from the social sciences, design studies and performative arts and if suitable, embed them into our animation curriculum.

Paul Ward describes a general model for experimental learning in *Pervasive Animation*, examining how animation studies is an interdisciplinary or perhaps better, a plural teaching field, with its genesis and future implicitly connecting knowledge across disciplines (Buchan et al. 2013, p.334). We wanted to push this idea into our practice through fieldwork activities. Animation and its study elicit broad modes of engagement through image-making, sound design, cinematics, performance, history, politics, culture, gender and storytelling. As Ward describes, we sought to draw students' appreciation of animation as an interconnected web of disciplines in tension.

3.2 PRECEDENCE

The concept for the project was born in the early years of the development of the degree program. We were interested in challenging students to find inspiration from the physical world through observational drawing, museum projects and public art. The ethical culture of learning embedded into our curriculum fosters an engagement: with emerging local knowledge; the post-colonial politics of *land*; the decolonisation of historical records; and encourages us to look to the past and to the future with fresh eyes. Physical encounters with historical artefacts have been of high value as catalysts in this regard. In the second year, students in groups are challenged to find inspiration within the archives of the *Sydney Powerhouse Museum* (The Powerhouse). The Powerhouse holds an impressive and extensive collection of artefacts and domestic relics from the past two centuries. All manner of curiosities can be observed and handled, including medical equipment, tools, household items and packaging from brands that were once iconic in a pre-digital world. Many of these collectables speak to a way of life that is almost forgotten.

Moreover, when introduced through artfully told anecdotes, these artefacts or accounts add great drama and interest to the experience. Students walk deep into the museum storage vaults and have a chance to explore many of the objects hidden from the public in a dark and remarkably mysterious place. Most reflect upon the visit as highly memorable and evocative; feeling that they were somewhere quite extraordinary with objects of importance.

3.3 FRAMING

Digital tools have improved many aspects of the animation workflow. The technology has sped up production: reducing cost and making the medium accessible to early-career filmmakers (Alvarez & Lorenzo 2014). Arguably, digital workflows also come with a price. Artists are likely to spend more time in a dark computer lab engaged with a computer peripheral and little to no contact with the outside world. Alvarez

suggests that physical materials such as paint, paper and clay are no longer essential for animation production, and the animator no longer needs to connect with the physical world.

We sought to challenge students to engage with a partially familiar animation task, but away from the usual campus environment and without access to digital forms of information. As a calculated obstacle designed to challenge resourcefulness, we required students to physically search for evidence and inspiration from the landscapes. From these activities, we hoped that uniquely observed inspiration would seed ideas and become personal experiences to draw upon immediately and in the coming years when original content would be required.

Extended outdoor classroom experiences reframe and challenge animation pedagogy: subverting the animation studio's convenience and placing students in unfamiliar environments that expand their potential sphere of engagement. The value we could see in a field trip predicated a slow, non-digital primary experience that would be difficult to recreate in the university campus.

A pedagogy of animation is multifaceted: activating disciplines including performance, fine arts, the social sciences, cinema studies, sound and music, design and creative writing. Strategies to find "truth" often give rise to exercises designed to reveal authenticity, which effectively reframes the creative approach (Gidney & McGrath 2020).

In the fine arts, the "found object" can be an essential and inspirational part of a development process that interrupts and challenges contrivance in design. In drawing practise, "observation" is a vital process requiring the artist/practitioner to challenge preconceived ideas and draw from what they see at that moment. Observational drawing breaks down and subverts graphical and pictorial tropes, simultaneously exciting a more authentic representation of experience or landscape.

In the social sciences, anthropologist Tim Ingold writes in his essay *Drawing Making Writing* (Ingold 2011):

> "To observe is not so much to see what is 'out there' as to watch what is going on. Its aim is thus not to represent the observed but to participate with it in the same generative moment."

Similarly, in theatre and the dramatic arts, Stilson describes Stanislavski's approach to *method acting*, as being an "art of experiencing" rather than "the art of representation" (Stilson 2005). *Method Acting* is a conceptual framework for practice and research in the performing arts. The objective is to find voice and originality through a process of deep projection into a character's life beyond what might be written in the text. Paul Wells also discusses the value of Stanislavski's method of articulating authentic objectives when developing character and the commonality between animator and actor (Wells 2013). The desire to look for a more profound and nuanced human experience manifests in various practice modalities across many of the Arts.

We were interested in how students were guided in their interpretation from the encounters they experienced. We wanted students to engage with and interrogate the site's recorded history and consider whose histories these accounts belong to and whether there might be other histories or stories that perhaps have been neglected in any public record or anecdotal account. For example, is there an indigenous account? Were migrant communities who came to the site in search of opportunity recorded in any way? There is even a reflexive dimension to this project where the practice of field research itself has narrative potential as students recognise that their own experiences of the site might become a central theme creatively and autoethnographically.

In his book *Animation, Process, Cognition and Actuality*, Dan Torre describes the process of analysing or 'interrogating' objects through animation to uncover what he describes as "actuality" (the dictionary

definition being "the state of existing in reality"), forming a 'forensic' approach to animation (Torre 2017, p.201).

Torre draws parallels between animation production and forensic science. Forensic science is the methodical and detailed study of a crime scene in order to put together a theory based on evidence of past events (Torre 2017, p.206). Torre states:

> "a forensics approach to animation places emphasis upon the process and actions of animation, as it seeks to uncover the manner in which an object has previously moved. This becomes critical in cases where there is evidence that an event has occurred, but there is no direct indexical motion recording of that event."

Torre makes the case that by observing an object, we can make educated assumptions about the inherent movement that resulted in the current state without having witnessed that movement first-hand.

Torre clarifies that there is validity in taking an archaeological or forensic approach to the study of animation. We wanted students to have the opportunity to look at the site as though a detective and imagine what may have occurred in the space based on physical clues.

Torre explains that in the "life is movement" idea materiality is the result of movement: an object or a thing exists as a consequence of action or energy. Torre describes materiality as "the inverse of movement", linking materiality with movement (Torre 2017, p.208). This perspective further highlights the importance of a student's experience with real material objects and places as part of the "story prospecting" process.

By visiting ruined towns, students could examine objects and landscapes as Torre describes through "forensic investigation": making inferences regarding historical movement and story at these locations.

Sarah Pink develops two critical ideas in her work on sensory ethnography which picks up on Torre's idea of actuality and of life being evidenced in movement. Pink then introduces a discussion of the work of Ingold and explores another view of place being defined by the movement of humans through and within it (Pink 2015, p.32). She then connects an argument that is a most valuable approach for creative practitioners, describing how imagination has become a vital and integral practice of everyday life, as anthropologist Appadurai argued (Pink 2015, p.39).

What then is the teaching value of approaching animation development by using methods from anthropology and ethnography? Ingold has written about what he describes as the overuse of the term "ethnography" (Ingold 2014) and he describes the practice succinctly as meaning participant observation. Accounts of ethnographic research very often involve patient and methodical fieldwork, yet the key objective of the ethnographic practise is to understand how people perceive and act in their world. Ingold states (Ingold 2011, page 243):

> "Ethnographers describe principally in writing how the people of some place and time perceive the world and how they act in it."

This objective rings true for the character designer, screenwriter, actor, author, filmmaker, and animation student.

To animate is understood to mean 'bringing to life'. To make this work well might involve creating representational imagery, changing over time, in a context that evokes empathy with an audience. Imagination is involved, the audience will fill in the steps connecting frames into motion, and scenes into a narrative structure, if present. And find meaning emotionally. Life, movement and place are strongly

connected in a visual narrative domain. Moreover, it is a highly imaginative and creative practice. If animation is a discipline, then animation practice and ethnographic research appear aligned in purpose, resonating in language and intent of enquiry, centred upon the human experience of life through stories.

Animation is a highly metaphorical medium. The materiality of character and world will, more often than not, be representational. Throughout the research process, authentic reference material and anecdotes will define starting points throughout a project's development. The value and quality of the reference material collected, as some evidence of life, however disparate, will be a rich resource for structuring ideas, pinning the project's logic to fragments of a reality that has happened and that is human. In many ways, animation is the perfect medium to realise the stories of characters with inaccessible lives. Content that is fictional or non-fiction, from any moment in time, or any world is roughly equally challenging to produce, unlike live-action film making, bound by the physicality of casting, location and period. Animators can create anything because they must create everything. Through our discoveries during fieldwork, we hope to put these ideas into practice.

3.4 FIELDWORK

Fieldwork is an essential part of qualitative research in many disciplines. In our fieldwork, we hope to expand upon these brief encounters of museums and situate the engagement to be on a larger scale. Ideally, we would choose sites that would seem remote and entirely unfamiliar. We looked for something like a whole town with a notable local history, big enough to allow individuals to wander through unguided, encouraging students to make different discoveries rather than have a curated experience. We found a small number of possible sites, all considered 'ghost towns', and well within reach from Sydney. The locations are mostly remnants of failed speculative ventures (usually in the bush) and often involved 'digging stuff up' to exploit natural resources. They seemed suitably mysterious and quite well documented in the New South Wales State Library archives, meaning that much of the information would be easily accessible to undergraduate students. Of these abandoned sites, we favoured two locations: Hill End, a goldrush settlement; and Newnes, a shale oil mining settlement.

Fieldwork is an essential method in ethnographic research, and good practice examples have been invaluable to us throughout this research. Chapter 3 of "Prior to Fieldwork" (Blommaert & Jie 2018) set out guidelines for approaching classical ethnographic research that can be applied in our undergraduate classroom. We felt it essential to have some rudimentary basic field research experience before adopting the practices to partially imagined worlds and fictionalised characters. We wanted to approach our fictionalised characters and story moments as if they were alive, and we were researchers working in their world. We would be on assignment amongst living people in a singular present through role-play, faithfully discovering ethnographic evidence. To work, this would require some imagination.

3.4.1 Ethnography

We are not approaching ethnography as seasoned social scientists but rather as a starting point. As per the description in the *Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Anthropology* (Howell 2018) it is useful for starting to articulate objectives while in the field with students:

> "The ethnographic method is called participant-observation. It is undertaken as open-ended inductive long-term living with and among the people to be studied, the sole purpose of which is to achieve an understanding of local knowledge, values, and practices 'from the native's point of view'".

In this project, it was never possible to engage with actors (people as subjects of interest) ethnographically, directly with people's lives (Atkinson 2017), because few living actors exist on-site. The moment of interest may have happened many years before. The site, relics, anecdotes, and sensory aspects to being emplaced still offer valuable inspiration and knowledge, but they need to be imagined as if the site is entirely sans natives. Academically, it seemed problematic to pursue an ethnographic approach to fieldwork as defined. Reading further, it seemed that contemporary variations of approach, sensory ethnographic (Pink 2015), and autoethnographic methods would go some way to engage with the authentic experience of place and the actors' missing experience (living). Sensory and Auto-ethnography ask the user to become an actor through empathetically documenting a personal response to a site and an imagined world. There will be some engagement that will be as visceral as it may have been in the past. However, there will also be an imaginary vector toward the historical evidence movement and energy discovered.

3.4.2   Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a form of qualitative research. An author uses self-reflection and writing to explore anecdotal and personal experience: connecting this autobiographical story to broader cultural, political and social meanings. Introducing this ethnographic research model would be useful when human subjects of interest are not alive or available to observe or interview. Instead, the researcher might act as a surrogate or medium using their responses and sensory experiences for analysis. In *Interpretive Autoethnography* Norman Denzin helps to define autoethnography, by quoting various practitioners including Carolyn Ellis's very useful reflection (Denzin 2017, p.19):

> "*As an autoethnographer, I am both the author and focus of the story, the one who tells and the one who experiences, the observer and the observed….. I am the person at the intersection of the personal and the cultural, thinking and observing as an ethnographer and writing and describing as a storyteller"*

As an animator writing as autoethnographer, we read in *Hysteria: An autoethnographic reflection on making an animated documentary film from archive material* (Scott-Hawkins 2019), Alys Scott-Hawkins discuss her own experiences as both subject and author.

> "Using autoethnographic writing, I return to the state of mind that produced this film – asking how and why it came to exist - and through audio reflection I re-read the sketchbook to analyse the processes of drawing, annotating and editing which produced it. In doing so, I attempt to understand the intuitive process of interpretation, and to draw out insights which can inform my future practice."

Scott-Hawkins analyses her own processes, her archives and recollections from her journey as a filmmaker, writing reflectively as both commentator and subject. Importantly her goal to engage with the "process of interpretation" is an insight that we would also ask of our students.

Autoethnography is a research method that can be useful when the project's outcome might be, as ours were, personal performances or storytelling. The performance would be an interpretive response to the evidence of collected data about the lives of others. There are many fragmented and cryptic accounts from the newspapers of the day, classified sections, list of births and deaths, job postings and other public notices that create a body of evidence of the lives people had at that moment. They are, in a sense, public performances by actors in a story that has long finished. The approach is well-suited to the performance-based work we hoped to have students create on site. Denzin states (Denzin 2017)

> "Interpretive performance ethnography allows the researcher to take up each person's life in its immediate particularity and to ground the life in its historical moment we move back

and forth in time using a version of Sartre's progressive regressive method - interpretation works forward in the conclusion of a set of acts taken up by the subject while working back in time interrogating the historical cultural and biographical conditions that moved the person to experience the events being studied."

3.4.3   Mapping

Visual Mapping as a qualitative research method often used in design studies to illustrate and examine the relationships between collections of ideas and evidence. As a participatory process, it is often conducted in groups, iterating and refining information to reveal degrees of connectedness and identify patterns. In decoding mapping as practice, the authors (Genz & Lucas-Drogan 2017) write:

"Mapping can be used as a research tool to make social and spatial practices and the interactions in space visual and tangible. By visualising spatial practice and interpreting a map, researchers can experience data that they were not even aware of. Additionally, we generally understand Mapping as a process during fieldwork and urban research to discover, structure and highlight the spatial and social interactions and point out the blind spots, all of which one might not be able to capture by writing field notes, doing participatory observation or qualitative interviews. "

A broad reading across nascent design methods, arts and social sciences revealed that some techniques would resonate more strongly with our student cohort and be valuable as fieldwork activities. Individuals mapping historical records and artefacts from the site through their own experiences via journaling, interviews, recordings, photography and other forms of embodied research has immense value as an individual's record of their experience and observation. A grander exercise would be to then bring all these maps together into a group meta-map.

Mapping practice could begin literally as a cartesian map. As perturbations, abstract ideas and tangential evidence are added any cartesian logic as a map can become lost. The form evolves multidimensionally, with multiple articulations present from the group of contributors. The resulting document enmeshes multimodal information, connections and relationships in flux as the knowledge set matures. In his essay discussing life as a "meshwork" (Ingold 2011), Tim Ingold illuminates the degree of interconnectedness of lives moving through spaces, leaving paths as lines of movement, evidence of drama, endeavour, struggle and achievement. Mapping is a useful practice for observing and participating with complexity as a multidimensional interpretive analysis. There is both chaos and truth captured in such a finished map, and it would prove to be an excellent activity for our fieldwork.

An example we share with students comes from a paper discussing a Pig Abattoir regeneration project. Drawing out the personal and historical stories of the site was key to the regeneration process.   The stories helped to understand the human and emotional energy spent in this location (Eräranta et al. 2016). In this example, mapping human experiences reveal the potential for narrative moments, which animators could connect emotionally with an audience.

3.4.4   Collecting Evidence

Collecting evidence that can later be analysed or investigated more closely has always been an integral facet of material research. An ethical approach to gathering evidence is an important tenant that we made clear in our work with students as best practice. Taking physical samples from the site was strongly discouraged, and

we instructed the students to tread lightly and leave the location as we found it: with as little impact as possible. Collecting a record rather than a sample is best for our work.

In commercial animation production, building reference data sets remains an essential part of preproduction. Data may be in the form of photography, videography, texture, performance and lighting reference, making maps, and collecting data from LIDAR scanning. Importantly, critical, creative contributors will want to experience sites first-hand to understand the scale and spatial relationships involved. Furthermore, talking with experts from relevant fields to the project is essential to facilitate problem-solving and aesthetic expertise for production.

For example, during the first *Happy Feet* animated feature film production, supervising artists at *Animal Logic* spent some months collecting reference material in the Antarctic. Again, during the production of the film *Guardians of Ga'hool*, animators and designers often travelled to bird sanctuaries to closely study owls and their habitats. It remains common practice to collect original visual resources such as backgrounds skies and texture imagery because production designers generally strive to be unique. Additionally, they are sensitive to avoiding reliance on stock imagery for creative, legal, and financial reasons. Similarly, the acquisition of primary resources is an integral preproduction task in most visual-effects productions in which invisible integration or digital recreation is the objective.

3.5 Journaling

Students needed to keep a journal and record field notes, both text and image, and be precise with details recorded from the very beginning. Drawings would become essential records of the experience. In *Sketching for Animation* Peter Parr discusses many examples of how fundamental journaling and drawing are to the early development of ideas as observational practice in animation (Parr 2016). There would be many downtime moments over the days away, presenting opportunities to walk and sketch from the landscape and found objects.

In *Being Alive*, anthropologist Ingold writes of the importance that drawing and walking have as a practice within anthropological fieldwork and challenges the separation of making text and image as separate activities, suggesting that journaling takes a more holistic approach collecting material in the field (Ingold 2011). Ingold even speculates in the preface that there might be a new discipline awaiting to be discovered coming from art, architecture and anthropology with the commonalities of observation, description and proposal (Ingold 2011). Perhaps this is not a new discipline at all but rather an evolving and expanding discipline found in practice-based animation research and development where art, architecture and anthropology equate to aesthetics, world-building and the character-story paradigm.

Furthermore, Ingold writes that drawing as a practice has been lost in contemporary field research as text and image are predominantly recorded by computer and camera. He argues that drawing and recording by gesture, observation and line making are deserving of a more serious and holistic method of collecting evidence (Ingold 2011, p220).

> "The objective of anthropology is to seek a generous, comparative but nevertheless critical understanding of human being and knowing in the one world we all inhabit. The objective of ethnography is to describe the lives of people other than ourselves, with an accuracy and sensitivity honed by detailed observation and prolonged first-hand experience."

In animation foundation we draw through observations, it is participatory, and slow (most often), and it appears to be a similar form of research.

"Critically, the keyboard ruptures the direct link between perception, gesture and its trace that is crucial to observational description. Its effect is to transform the meaning of description from a scribble practise in which the writing hand leaves a continuous trace that is always responsive, in the quality of the line, to conditions as they unfold, to a practise of verbal composition in which the aim is to render an account wherein every word is chosen for its fit within the totality.

A return to drawing is thus also a return to handwriting replacing the rigid opposition between image and text with the continuum of scribble practises, or process is of line making, ranging from handwriting through calligraphy to drawing and sketching, with no clear points of demarcation between them." *(ibid, page 225)*

Authors, screenwriters and directors will explore many nebulous pathways when researching a story or building knowledge about a place, character or period. The process is often necessarily slow in comparison with the production phase and frequently involves fieldwork and investigation. As an academic writer Alys Scott Hawkins reflects on the importance of the sketchbook to her own practice during the making of her archival film *Hysteria*:

"The sketchbook is the workshop and the laboratory for the film. It is the container for source material. It is the space for notes and ideas. It is the place where ideas are recorded and tested out." *(Hawkins, Hysteria, p.12).*

Having returned from their fieldwork activities, the students could then reflect upon this material over the following semester when developing narrative ideas. Hawkins continues and describes the importance of the sketchbook as a record for reflection:

"It provides a platform for responding to the material within it. It becomes a document of the process, the collection of behind-the-scenes material; everything that is the film but did not end up on-screen."

4 THE FIELD TRIPS

The accounts for the two field trips that we conducted are included in the Appendix. There we have included a brief history of the sites, details of the activities we ran, and our engagement observations.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_07] – Cover page to the 2016 Hill End field trip introduction and preparation document prepared.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_22] – Cover page to the 2017 Newnes field trip introduction and preparation document prepared.

5 DIFFICULTIES

Commitment from students outside the main teaching calendar is difficult to achieve. The challenge we encountered running both activities was administrative, securing sufficient students' participation to be financially viable. Many students did not see value in attending activities which were neither compulsory nor resemble internships or work experiences. We ran both trips as orientation activities, not having the

same financial support as a core subject and taking place at an awkward part of the semester before teaching commences when students may still be away from campus in their hometowns.

Another unforeseen difficulty concerned the several structured activities on the Newnes trip. The distances between areas of interest were quite far resulting in long walks that took more time than anticipated—resulting in less free time for students to explore independently. At Hill End, the areas of interest had been quite close, and students could easily explore the whole site with plenty of reflection time.

6   PRACTICAL FIELDWORK MODEL FOR ANIMATORS

Please refer to the Appendix for the activities undertaken during the field trips. Although this paper's focus is on utilising this fieldwork model in the teaching context, it could also be successfully utilised by practitioners in industry.

From our experience, the following items would be considered valuable when planning future fieldwork for animators.

- Allow ample time to plan before departing.
- Secure commitment from students.
- Design on major task to be created during the duration of the field trip, by individuals, and presented to the group on the final night.
- Run at least one formal group research activity with the whole group, ideally engaging with texts or material related to the study of the site (for example in a library or museum, or at an exhibition).
- Allow for a stay of 2-4 days so that at least one full 24-hour day (and night) is experienced.
- Select a site that is accessible but unfamiliar in order to engender mystery.
- Choose destinations with a powerful but forgotten or decayed past, which is a testament to many authentic stories.
- If possible, select a location in which some, possible conflicting, historical documentary evidence. To give contexts in tension and present a puzzle to be solved on-site.
- Plan to eat together and reflect on work so that members share their findings.
- Engage with unforeseen obstacles that can be solved as a group.
- Construct achievable activities that require minimal equipment and zero internet connectivity.
- Aim to visit locations and view artefacts in which performative, creative and original inspiration could be drawn. Ideally, students will layer fictional stories on top of the evidence that is investigated.

7   FUTURE WORK

Further research would be interesting to explore, in other disciplines, additional practices that might resonate with the known plurality of practices found in animation making and animation studies. Stanislavsky, Torre, Pink and Ingold share considerable overlap in their advocacy of practice methods. By examining stories as vessels for the evidence of energy centred upon a broad understanding of movement, fresh perspectives become apparent in animation development, research and practice. This project has revealed several new and intriguing paths to explore borrowing from disciplines including anthropology and forensics. The investigative modes practised in these disciplines are generally not found in an animation degree. The effort to engage students in fieldwork and undertake the projects described here have been important examples to further develop within our curriculum. We believe there is value in broadening these

fieldwork activities to include regional universities and cohorts who align with the objectives and share the logistical, financial and organisational effort involved.

There are exciting possibilities to explore how more practical approaches from cross-disciplinary practice methods can be embedded in the animation curricula. The study of ethnography may be useful for developing narratives that have complexity and subtlety and benefit from authentic human experiences: both historical and experienced as an author.

8 CONCLUSION

In this project, we sought to construct practical and relatable fieldwork methods from our own experiences with animation undergraduates while developing ideas and inspiration for animation projects in early development.   We plan to incorporate fieldwork and immersive experiences on-site as a necessary and valuable addition to the creative process and our pedagogy. The gestation of an idea from inspiration right up until preproduction can often be as long or longer than the production phase. This is true both for studio features and short independent film projects. Early development in animation is a qualitative research practice. When students can incorporate experiences of fieldwork and related interdisciplinary methods into their work, we observe noticeable improvements, challenging convention, and innovating as animators.

Our students collected many ideas and inspirations throughout these expeditions. We expected that each journey would seed ideas and become visible in student work over the coming academic year. We observed some evidence of this: both as subject matter in animation work and as evidenced by the partnerships formed in group activities.

We have noticed that there is increasing confidence in our students to work in a hybrid aesthetic process: often filming locations and placing characters into the footage in service of the narrative rather than rendering or drawing everything in the frame. There is an appreciation of place in this process that can be timesaving in production and enriching in the development phase: seeking out locations and physical inspiration. The hybrid assembly of character and place, imaginary and real is an ethnographic inquiry for the animator.

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10 APPENDIX

10.1 GENERAL APPROACH TO ACTIVITIES AND TASKS WHILE ON CAMP.

We found it useful to frame the field trip activities as groups aligned with applied craft and animation tasks (performances and presentations), discovery through fieldwork (ethnographic) practices, and pre-departure research (archives).

10.1.1 Activity based upon ethnographic fieldwork objectives

- Journey - arrival and departure, set up camp and pack up.
- Discovery - walking the town, journaling, Mapping, and drone flying (to gain a bird's-eye view)
- Community - dinner, discussion, eating, sharing journal insights and observations as a group
- Discovery - walking the ruins and river valley, journaling
- Applied Craft and Discovery - drawing workshop on site
- Discovery - night walking, yarning and making music around a campfire (imagination, embodiment, emplacement, encampment)
- Discovery - night photography and walking – long exposures (imagination, embodiment, emplacement, encampment)
- Discovery – walking and mapping the valley environs from observation and research material including flora and fauna (domestic and native), destruction of the environment and decay of industrial ruins, and the effects of toxic industry on the environment.

10.1.2 Activity based upon Applied Research and Craft practice

- Applied Craft - camera basics DSLR and video techniques including news crew interviews
- Applied Craft and Discovery - drawing workshop on-site canyons journaling, exploring mine sites, cemetery, local historical society museum and visiting a private collection of artefacts outside of town.
- Preparation – archives and Library engagements before departure. Meet with historians.
- Preparation – journaling (beginning a new record of activity), literature collecting.
- Applied Craft - camera effects, DSLR and video techniques (including time-lapse and effects photography), site focus, historic hotel, industrial ruins and community ruins.

10.1.3 Activity based upon Animation and Design tasks.

- Story preparation and rehearsal - drawing recording and editing and review.
- Presentation – performance: night yarning and ghost stories
- Presentation – open-air cinema night: animated story presentations, imagined lives
- Mapping - drone flying or a bird's-eye view of geography in the context of community, infrastructure, utilities and demographics, and anecdotes from remaining residents. Connecting evidence of individuals and activity to geographic form and annotating cause and effect and changes.

10.2 HILL END FIELD TRIP
New South Wales [33.0239° S, 149.4221° E]
Four hours west of Sydney by vehicle.
14th to 16th March 2016

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_38] Hill End as it is now, a quite historical hamlet in the national park, gold mining and fortune seeking have long since ended.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_02] Hill End as it was in the 1860s, a gold rush town, home to thousands of prospectors and fortune seekers.

The first expedition took us to the historic town of Hill End, a four-hour car journey west of Sydney over the Blue Mountains. Hill End is a historic gold mining town. In his book, *Major Controversies of the Australian Goldrush*, Brian Hodge outlines the politics and social activity associated with the gold rush period in NSW history, (Hodge 2003). News travelled quickly and internationally, attracting fortune-seekers from afar to what must have seemed the very remote encampment of Hill End in a distant, colonial Australia.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_06] Hill End Students engaged in a practical workshop on documentary making crafts techniques and skills.

Preparation involved paperwork for consent, health and safety and logistics, and importantly a full day spent with research librarians in the State Library archive collection. Here historians presented a collection of artefacts, stories and records from the period including evidence of tragedies and fortunes, photographs, gold nuggets, stereoscopes, and the daily local newspapers. The page stories and personal accounts documented during the 1850-1870 period, painted a rich backdrop for understanding what living in Hill End at that time might have been.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_35]. Archival documents and artefacts available at the State Library of NSW.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_36]. Archival documents and artefacts available at the State Library of NSW.

10.2.1 History
[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_11] – Hill End main street archival photo from the State Library of NSW taken in the 1860s during a time of frenzied growth.

The research project involved taking students on a three-day camping trip to Hill End; an old mining town (approx.) a four-hour car trip from Sydney. A ghost town famous for its boom during the gold rush in the 1850s cut into a dramatic natural mountainous landscape. The old town is built upon a rocky hillside covered in conifer trees meeting eucalypt forests. The town is dotted with ruins; boarded up mine shafts strewn across otherwise abandoned fields and a forgotten main street with empty shops, houses, and small industrial sites. The Hill End Hotel is the centrepiece of the town and still a meeting place for the minimal number of locals and tourists. Today the town sits in a national park and is classified as historical, with a museum, artists' residences and campgrounds.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_09] – The famous Holtermann nugget weighed in at about 93kg of gold. Found at Hill End, it inspired man to come to the town and take up gold fossicking. The town grew spontaneously and chaotically during the Gold Rush times.

The first story that we inspired students with prior to departure concerned that of the Holtermann nugget. ('Story of the Holterman Nugget' 2016) (Goldnuggetdetecting 2020). The "Holtermann Nugget" was found in 1872 at Hill End by Bernhardt Holtermann. It was 1.5 metres long, weighed 286kgs and was composed of a mixture of quartz and gold. Containing 93kg of gold, it inspired many fortune seekers to come to Hill End, where they too might strike it rich. The quest for gold was the compelling engine driving nearly every story and personal account on record. Holtermann had been born in Germany in 1838 and came to Sydney in 1858. He moved to the goldfields where it was tough going for ten years before this significant discovery.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_33] – In the mid 20th century the town became a retreat for artists who would become important figures in the history of Australian art. The Art Gallery of NSW hold many works featuring Hill End by artists such as Russel Drysdale and Donald Friend.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_37] – The Art Gallery of NSW hold many works featuring Hill End.

10.2.2   Activities

The activities we had organised for occupied about 3-4 hours each day, one in the morning and one in the evening. The final day was reserved for preparing for the story presentation after dinner that night.

10.2.2.1   *Journey, Arrival and Setting up Camp*

Travelling to the location, setting up tents and finally coming together to discuss the next few days occupied most of the first day. One carpooling group of students had difficulties with their vehicle and needed to be rescued by a staff member, leaving the car to be repaired after the field trip was concluded. In total, we were a group of about 16 people. Late in the afternoon was an opportunity for staff to meet the students and discuss the intention of the workshop activities and tasks.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_10] – Hill End. Setting up around our improvised camp kitchen area. Eating together and discussion groups here became central to the project.

We had brought with us a good lot of equipment from the university, and each student would have their own access to photography, video and sound equipment and receive a necessary skills workshop on operating the gear.

10.2.2.2   *The Main Task – Yarning.*

Yarning can be defined as telling an exceptionally long story of adventure or incredible happenings. In the spirit of prospecting, students were challenged to explore the ghost town and environs over the next few days outside of the planned activity. The intension was to look for inspiration, ideas, images, for concocting an elaborate ghost-story that they would perform to the group on location on the final evening.

The results yielded highly imaginative and unique performances with improvised lighting, impromptu costumes, props and sound effects. Each story was performed at a different site, and the audience was walked all around town carrying torches and beverages, eager to see and hear each story. This vaudevillian caravan brought to life tall-tales of delight that would have been right at home in the 1860's. It was a fantastic opportunity to experience how life may well have been in time past.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_32] – The main task at Hill End was to create and perform a yarn based upon the site.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_03] – Hill End. A student collecting ideas and journal references as they develop their yarning stories for final presentation.

10.2.2.3   Mapping and Drone Flying

The first planned activity, a short distance from the campground was a drone flying exercise. Using technology to gain a birds-eye view, the students began the process of appreciating the spatial layout of the landscape. This was the first step in acquiring knowledge about how the community could have functioned.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_01] – Hill End. Image taken from the drone mapping activities of another group involved in a drawing workshop.

Over the coming days, students mapped the essential locations, first spatially and then layering in other knowledge gained from the museum and the local historical archives and by walking and observing and imagining relationships. Journals reflected the acquired mapping knowledge with image text and material samples found on site.

10.2.2.4   Applied Craft – Photography, Videography, and the Documentary

On day two, the students participated in workshops covering professional documentary camera techniques, and we demonstrated how to set up audio, focus and shoot with the professional camera rigs. Covering composition, intent, lighting on location and working with audio, the students were then encouraged to take the cameras and create their own content.

Two short video compilations from both field trips are available as supporting media to have been presented at the Society for Animation Studies annual conference in 2020. These short works give a sense of the locations and some of the activity that occupied our time during the field trips. Newnes field trip teaser (McGrath & Gidney 2020) and the Hill End field trip teaser (McGrath & Gidney 2019)

10.2.2.5   Field Notes – Drawing and Journaling

On the third day co-facilitator, graphic novelist, and animation academic, Pat Grant, ran an 'en Plein air ' drawing and journaling workshop at several of the more distant locations of the settlement. These guided masterclass sessions developed techniques and observation with attention to nuanced local materiality and evidence of human movement through the site.

10.2.2.6   Places of note and interest.

Students were encouraged to appreciate what might be understood to be an ethnographer's awareness of emplacement while focussing upon activities. Moving around the town centre, they experienced the embodiment of being physically situated, camping, eating, walking, sleeping and even getting there. This coined with the idea that all of our senses can give us useful and intricate knowledge of a place and how it might have been. (Pink 2015, p.37)

10.2.2.7   Resonance

The sum of workshops conducted at Hill End functioned as useful precursors to tasks that would feature in the curriculum during the coming academic year. The tasks would involve location shooting live-action plates, recording interviews and compositing them together as animated films. Technical expertise gained on camp was valuable for the students later in the semester. Students were also encouraged to think critically and conceptually about animation as a documentary, particularly about how fragile the idea of objectivity and culture is when interpreting historical archives. Notably, much later in the academic year, two groups of students who attended the Hill End camp developed excellent project work thematically connected to historical mining communities, citing the influence of their recent experiences.

10.3 NEWNES FIELD TRIP
New South Wales   [33.1950° S, 150.2413° E]
Three and a half hours WNW of Sydney by vehicle.
9th to 12th March 2017

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_13] – Newnes. The remote bushland valley was dominated by a large shale oil mine and processing plant in the 1920s

Newnes is a tranquil place today, on the edge of the world heritage wilderness area, with a tiny population, easy access by car and a wealth of evidence to be discovered in the landscape. This is a testament to the past, and the lives lived there (Watson et al. 2014). This beautiful location today sits in silent and stark contrast to the devastated wasteland and failed industrial ambitions that poisoned the ground and denuded the forests and yet were home to thousands of people a century ago seeking jobs and opportunity. Hill End had been a community of prospectors hoping to make their claims and strike it rich, Newnes was a very different venture.

10.3.1   Description
[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_17] – Newnes is an historic site. The location of a former community and industrial shale oil mining town, now overgrown and silent, hidden in the bushland of the Wolgan Valley.

Newnes is quite literally the end of the road. At its peak, the population was more than two thousand people living in and around the industrial mining complex. It is on the edge of the Wollemi world heritage wilderness area and today is difficult to imagine the once denuded hills surrounding a toxic industrial site. Today the national park that envelopes the hamlet, hosts many ruins that lay abandoned and silent as evidence of lives once lived. Like a lesser Angkor Wat, overgrown by grasses and trees are the abandoned coking ovens, storage tanks, railway lines, and mine shafts. An impressive 800m long rail tunnel cut high in the fern-covered escarpment, once facilitated the exploitation of this hidden valley to the city beyond. Our campsite was located on the historic Newnes Hotel's grounds, relocated piece by piece by impassioned locals when the river flooded in the 1980s.

10.3.2   History
The stories we find in Newnes are quite different from those from Hill End. This was a government-endorsed industrial venture with international backing. The project changed the landscape dramatically at a scale, unlike anything at Hill End. Railway, oil refinery, pipelines, workshops, township and brickworks, were constructed. There was the promise of employment and opportunity, attracting workers from the city of Sydney. Sadly, the enterprise was a complete failure on many fronts, devastating many people's lives and ambitions. Newnes is a valley that has many echoes of human failure.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_15] – Newnes Station circa 1920. A narrow-gauge railway was constructed through tunnels and traversing breathtaking cliff edges to reach the mining sites and town.

10.3.3   Activities
Much like the Hill End plan, we organised 3-4 hours of activity each day reserving the last day for preparation of the main task to be presented after dinner on the final day.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_14] – Newnes Hotel is an historic building that serves as our base and a place to conduct some of our group activities.

10.3.3.1 Establishing Camp

The format over the three days and nights would be like that of Hill End. The first afternoon is arrival and orientation, the second is about exploration, and the third is preparation for a presentation. As the number of participants was less than 20, we could organise a small bus and trailer as transport from the university campus. We were joined by three other academic staff, Fionn McCabe, Gabrielle Clarke and Bailey Sharp as co-facilitators. Group and individual activities designed to engage with the site were planned to include photo walks, storytelling exercises, demonstrations of equipment, guerrilla animation making and drawing activities. The trip concluded in a final banquet with an outdoor screening of work on the final night.

10.3.3.2 Mapping and Drawing

The first morning was an important group activity designing a map of the valley area collectively. The map was based on the previous night's arrival bushwalk. The map featured collected impressions and abstractions punctuated with characters and antics and quickly became an art project which continued to be added to over the coming days reflecting out knowledge of the location.   One again, we used drone photography as an extension of the mapping exercise. Flying the craft very high, refining and embellishing an understanding of the scale of the landscape and surrounds.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_16] – Mapping on the balcony of the Newnes Historic Hotel

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_12] – Mapping on the balcony of the Newnes Historic Hotel

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_18] – Mapping on the balcony of the Newnes Historic Hotel

Unfortunately, the drone became stuck high up in a tree, and the activity pivoted, becoming a group challenge to improvise a solution to the drone firmly stuck 30 metres up in tree branches. The value of our own challenges as anecdotes, when things go wrong, unplanned accidents, these are opportunities for sharing and collaboration. (An Introduction to Ethnographic Field Work) (Ethnographic Fieldwork). Eventually, the group found some string, and a large metal bolt out in the back shed behind the hotel. Students were able to throw the bolt up over the branch with the string attached to dislodge the craft. Other students caught the drone on a mattress as it fell. A complete team effort, working with what we could find laying around.   This improvisation must have been typical in the early communities living here and felt appropriate to have experienced in this place.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_19] – An example of the many hundreds of drawings and entries recorded in journals over the three days.

10.3.3.3 The Main Task - Dodecatomb

On this Newnes expedition, we asked for the articulation of a story using a format of 12 identifiable image moments: a 'dodecatomb', which is a nonsense concept coined from the number of images on a roll of photographic film and the ancient Greek sacrifice of a hundred cows; hecatomb. The idea being that 12 individual moments or images are sacrificed for the whole sequence. It is deliberately non-sensical, yet in execution requires very concise visual storytelling through experimentation. We consider it an excellent creative boundary condition to encounter.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_31] – Newnes main task was to create a "dodeatomb", a story told in 12 separate moments.

10.3.3.4 Walking

The Newnes site is quite large, with the historical sites being much further spread out than at Hill End. With no access by car, we had to travel on foot along bush tracks. We set out on a walk towards the ruins with plenty of light to get there this time. Arriving at the ruins after a decent walk, the students separated and began combing over industrial ruins grown over by vegetation, drawing, photographing and documenting the site. The furthest trek taken by one group followed the old narrow-gauge railway line for about 10km high up around the ridges of the valley and through very different terrain, Cooler and thick with the ferns of a small rainforest. Finally arriving at a dark and abandoned rail tunnel 800m long which hosted a glow-worm colony deep inside.   All of this evidence of vast energies spent shaping the environment to serve the industry of the day now lay abandoned and receding into the undergrowth of the forest. Many specific accounts of individuals and events have been documented and were easily found on historical plaques erected across the site.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_27] – Walking along the route of the narrow railway connecting the industrial ruins to the city of Sydney many miles away.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_28] – Walking along the route of the narrow railway connecting the industrial ruins to the city of Sydney many miles away.

10.3.3.5 Eating Together

Preparing food as a group and eating together outside using an open fire evokes a discussion of how food might have been prepared in the heyday of the site and creates a conducive social and communal atmosphere where ideas and reflections are freely shared.   The group camp kitchen became a vital hub during the day for meals and discussion, and This often involved sharing imagery and recordings or journals while eating together. Quite literally sharing our tastes and ideas from the day and underscoring how vital the rituals of food preparation can be in our lives and in the lives of the characters we create.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_23] – Camp kitchen where preparation of meals and the days activities could be talked about and shared.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_20] – Camp kitchen where preparation of meals and the days activities could be talked about and shared.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_21] – Camp kitchen where preparation of meals and the days activities could be talked about and shared.

10.3.3.6 Open-Air Screenings

In this location, eating and socialising outdoors and preparing meals by an open fire would have been a regular part of life in the valley. On the final night of each expedition, the students screened their images in an improvised cinema consisting of a white bed sheet hung near the campfire. The brief was to present twelve images or videos to tell a story. The story could be about anything and could include animation, stills, video and sound effects.

[GIDNEY_MCGRATH_Figure_24]. Each day's end offered an opportunity to reflect and share thoughts and inspirations.

10.3.3.7 Resonance

We were talking with students about the value of the ideas and designs they had collected beyond the immediate tasks at hand and found students had created a considerable amount of extra design work, each a segue from tasks that had been intended.   Journaling, sketching and walking on-site, scaffolded the narrative accounts found in newspapers and historical records. Students responded enthusiastically to site inspired imaginative play, like the "imagine if …." games that come up in a social setting around a campfire after a long day's activities.   We felt that this seeding of ideas an excellent additional outcome and looked forward to seeing evidence of the fieldwork experiences emerging throughout the coming year designs and projects.