



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

FACULTY OF EDUCATION THESIS EXAMINATION

Michael (Derby) Datura

**For the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Notes from Underground: a lament for eäarthlings

Friday, February 10, 2023
SFU Vancouver
Room 1425
at 1:00 PM

Examining Committee

Chair: Dr. Gillian Judson

Senior Supervisor: Dr. Sean Blenkinsop

Supervisor: Dr. Mark Fettes

Internal Examiner: Dr. Charles Bingham

External Examiner: Dr. Tyson Lewis, Professor
Dept. of Art Education, University of North
Texas

Abstract:

Datura, M. (2023). Notes from underground: A lament for earthlings. (Unpublished thesis). Simon Fraser University, Faculty of Education.

Dr. Sean Blenkinsop (Senior Supervisor)

What is education for in a time of ecological emergency? This work draws on lyric philosophy (Jan Zwicky) and the hermeneutic materialism of Walter Benjamin—particularly his collage-inspired compositions—to examine place-based education, Indigenous ways of knowing, and ecological ethics in the context of settler colonialism and the sixth extinction. The notion of tacking a few modules on sustainability to the science curriculum is clearly not sufficient to cultivate a deeper sense of ecological consciousness. This work critiques the ideal of an educated mind as defined by "formal operational" thinking, and attempts to point towards and enact a new kind of epistemological orientation (i.e. formal ecological thinking). The unconventional composition of the work is, in fact, the educational implication. By composing a "complex ecology of argumentation" the work attempts to cultivate an "ecosophic disposition" in order to recognize the significance of wisdom traditions, contemplative practices and critical reflexivity in a more-than-human world.