



## 4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Emotional Geographies 1-3 July 2013 at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Session Summary	
<b>Session Title</b>	<b>Emotional geographies of the coast (Session 1): The southwest of England</b>
<b>Session Abstract</b>	<p>The coast is where the land stops and the seas and oceans start. An obvious point - but one of great significance for terrestrial beings for whom water is an alien element. This presents human (and non-human) communities with all manner of fundamental physical, social, cultural and economic challenges and opportunities. Coasts are powerfully affective margins because they are where we confront the enigma that is the oceans. Those with high (macro) tidal ranges, and/or those vulnerable to erosion, inundation and facing climate change induced sea level rise, are mobile, and turbulent and subject to a series of rhythmic and novel changes on time scales that range between the hourly, the monthly the seasonal and beyond. Emotions are fluidly mobile. They flow through and over us, can wash us away - can flood and ebb in the body and in collectives of bodies like a tide in complex rhythms - become turbulent, then calm.- or even a storm surge they can unsettle a body. The emotive registers of coastal experiences are multiple, ranging from the joys of holiday making to the profound dread of loosing ones' home(land) through coastal erosion. Between these 'extremes' are a whole host of emotionally charged practices which include terrestrial and marine based recreation, on and offshore power generation schemes, coastal management consultations and decision making. As sites of emotional epiphany (tidal) coasts have long been the focus of artistic muse in terms of literature, sculpture, painting and performance.</p> <p>This session seeks to explore any of the topics related to emotional geographies of the coast mentioned above.</p>
<b>Keywords</b>	

Presentations		
#	Title	Author Name
1	"Our boats become our women; our women, vessels of magic, become our boats."	Rona Lee
2	Disrupted coastlines: unsettling the image?	Veronica Vickery
3	Finding the Face: Narratives of stone on the Jurassic Coast	Rose Ferraby
4	Time and Tide: History, Memory and the Severn Estuary	Steve Poole
5	Dreaming of Sabrina ("What has the estuary ever done for us?")	Antony Lyons

Session Convenors and Chair	
Session Convenor Name	Affiliation
Owain Jones	University of Gloucester
Bettina van Hoven	Department of Cultural Geography, University of Groningen
Session Chair name	Affiliation
Bettina van Hoven	Department of Cultural Geography, University of Groningen

**Session presentation details**

<b>Presentation 1</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>“Our boats become our women; our women, vessels of magic, become our boats.”</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This artist’s presentation will reflect on - <i>the encircling of shadow</i> - a body of inter-related ‘site responsive’ artworks, made in 2001, shown in three different locations: Newlyn Art Gallery, Penlee House, Penzance and on the foreshore at Newlyn, Cornwall (population 1,400 and the largest fishing port in England), which combined found material, video, performance, text and social engagement.</p> <p>The Newlyn Art Gallery, who commissioned the work, was originally built to house works by the Newlyn School of Painting a substantial colony of ‘plein air’ artists based there in the late 19th to early 20th century. A large and much loved public collection of their work is now held locally at Penlee House. The starting point for my enquiries was provided by the work of Walter Langley whose paintings frequently depict women standing at the edges of sea and shore.</p> <p>Supported by six months of local research and conducted using a range of inductive, participant, ethnographic and spatial methods the resulting work sought to ‘map’ a set of physical, cultural and gendered geographies of the liminal.</p> <p>My paper will briefly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the works produced (see attached images)</li> <li>• Reference the key ‘emotional’ encounters and discoveries, such as a meeting with the coxswain of the local lifeboat whose father, also a lifeboat man, had died attempting a rescue at sea, or the discovery that over 75% of boats in the contemporary fishing fleet are named after women, which influenced its genesis.</li> <li>• Reflect on the artistic strategies used in making and presenting the work, such as the use of light and shadow, and their capacity to:</li> <li>• Articulate an emotional geography of physical and social transition; departure and return; safety and danger; desire and loss; adventure and confinement; masculine and feminine.</li> <li>• Understand coastal zones as spaces in which material and symbolic boundaries are both drawn and become porous.</li> <li>• Consider the ways in which critically engaged artistic methodologies might offer means of responding to the emotional charge of coastal climate change</li> </ul>
<b>Author name</b>	<b>Author affiliation</b>
Rona Lee	University of Wolverhampton
<b>Presentation 2</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Disrupted coastlines: unsettling the image?</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The harsh Atlantic-facing granite coastline in the far west of Cornwall is part of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Site of Special Scientific Interest. It could also be described, however, as a fractured landscape. The postcard images that feed the popular imagination feature stunning coastal walks, romanticised mining ruins and cream teas. But these images distort and deny the complexity of this formerly-industrial region. The West Penwith cliff-line is pierced by moorland streams that have formed by erosion along geological fault lines in the igneous rock. The Poniou project is focusing on one such stream that has its source in the moor above Pennance Farm near Zennor. In summer this cattle-muddied turbid pool trickles for just over a mile to the sea. Another picture emerges when the stream is swollen with rain; in 2009 a freak storm off the Atlantic resulted in tragic loss of life when a bridge collapsed washing a car into the gorge above the cliff. This paper approaches the stream through the lens of a materials-based artist practice to consider how working with the life of the stream might lead to the generation of images in the studio that challenge sedimented forms of representation. Set against the backdrop of the picturesque frame of the heritage landscape, it will work with the mobility of water and its material power to undercut or disrupt received notions of landscape. Water renders well-trodden terrain impassable, inaccessible and hostile – the coastal footpath was closed for six months after the flooding. Working with the swollen stream and the geology of the unfolded cliff-line as affective sites of intersection and disruption, the presentation will consider the potential for the creative production of images that unsettle the frame of landscape.</p>

<b>Author name</b>	<b>Author affiliation</b>
Veronica Vickery	University of Exeter
<b>Presentation 3</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Finding the Face: Narratives of stone on the Jurassic Coast</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, on the south west coast of England, is defined as the area between the low water mark and the top of the cliff. The site is defined as a ‘natural’ World Heritage site by UNESCO, based on the unique nature of the Mesozoic fossil record. But behind this uniform categorization lies a coast that is in constant flux, made up by a web of materials, rhythms and ideas of time. As a result, the natural and human elements of this coastline cannot be seen in isolation: it is a complex weaving of human stories amongst the stones that form it.</p> <p>Moving away from the more traditional picture of the coast as a site of tourism and recreation, or erosion and loss, this paper will concentrate on the people working in this stone landscape, both in the past and present, including quarrymen, geologists and artists. It will look at how they have developed unique relationships with the material: lives and stories are linked with the connection between sea and land. As the stone is used and moved, those stories and people move with it, out into the wider landscape – elements of the coast travelling inland and out across the sea. By exploring the geobiographies of stone on the coast, it will draw out the intimate, diverse and sometimes surprising perspectives framed between the land and the sea.</p> <p>These subtle and complex relationships must be treated in a creative and imaginative way. Images have formed a key method of both researching and communicating these narratives and perspectives. It is hoped that by offering a personal, subjective view of lives on the coast, it will bring others closer to the people and places that create this unique environment.</p>
<b>Author name</b>	<b>Author affiliation</b>
Rose Ferraby	University of Exeter
<b>Presentation 4</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Time and Tide: History, Memory and the Severn Estuary</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This paper considers some historical aspects of community relations with the tide on the English side of the Severn Estuary c.1780-1880. It argues broadly that changing aesthetic values or ‘ways of seeing and feeling’ on the one hand, and powerful economic drivers on the other have made it difficult for us to understand tidal environments as they were more broadly experienced in quotidian and emotional terms in earlier centuries. Dominant historical narratives about the river Avon, for example which, until the intrusion of a floating harbour in 1809 twice daily carried Bristol’s detritus to the estuary and cradled its maritime trade in thick mud, have tended to represent tidal action as a ‘problem’ for shipping and a challenge for the local economy. But the eradication of tides from the city and the consequent distancing of its communities from some of the natural processes by which trade had originally been facilitated is not always best understood in terms of forward-looking modernity alone. With the help of contemporary writing and painting, this paper seeks historical avenues of reconnection with tidal environments we have lost, and with others we have retained but which we have since learned to read differently. Today, the intertidal zone between the vast container parks of Avonmouth and the M4 road bridge, no less than the neglected archaeology of Severn Beach (‘Bristol’s riverside resort on the Severn’) has become little more than an interfacial ‘edgeland’, fringed with ‘untidiness’, maritime litter and the rotting or rusting remains of past activity and enterprise. The eighteenth and nineteenth century estuary, by contrast, was more easily associated not only with small scale human labour but with leisure, picturesque beauty, and healthy air. An historical perspective, it is suggested here, may help to reconnect present-day experience with the natural environment at a time when climate change, rising sea levels and increasing flood-risk scenarios pose powerful challenges to community sustainability.</p>
<b>Author name</b>	<b>Author affiliation</b>
Steve Poole	University of the West of England, Bristol

Presentation 5	
<b>Title</b>	<b>Dreaming of Sabrina ('What has the estuary ever done for us?')</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>Drawing on a background of scientific and creative involvement with water landscapes, I am bringing a new attention to the Severn Estuary, and the revived plans to construct a mega barrage. For over 20 years, debates on this have addressed topics that include energy policy, economics, coastal management and ecology.</p> <p>Embracing a trans-disciplinary and personal response to this place, I have adopted a deep-mapping, geopoetic approach. These are overlapping terms - both in meaning and practice. Grounded in research and creative 'translation', there is a weaving of the rational and the imagination; of science and creativity; inner and outer worlds; hard and soft knowledge; light and dark.</p> <p>Some of my past initiatives have explored the relationship of the River Avon to the city of Bristol. Here, the tidal river was physically and psychologically banished from the heart of the city during the industrial era. Globally, such interventions and distancing of the lunar presence and rhythm are paralleled by the disconnection from, and the chronic destruction of, ecosystems and animal species.</p> <p>The situation of the Severn Barrage brings, for me, a fusion of interests - our relationships to coastal landscapes, and the topic of the damming of rivers to create reservoirs for hydropower generation and water supply. In the proliferation of dam and barrage projects worldwide, little attention is given to the complex vitality of the rivers; nor to the voices of those who relate to these water environments in emotional, creative, visceral, 'sentimental' ways; nor indeed to any intrinsic sacred status of these watercourses.</p> <p><i>"Sentimentality originally indicated the reliance on feelings as a guide to truth, but current usage defines it as an appeal to shallow, uncomplicated emotions at the expense of reason."</i></p> <p>The changing meaning of this term - increasingly pejorative - accompanied the rise of the industrial machine age, at the expense of ecological well-being. The tide may be turning; recently a court in New Zealand conferred legal 'personhood' on an entire river system. Seeking a launchpad for this creative exploration of the liminal, I selected three iconic images. All three are photographs taken at coastal/tidal locations (though only one is from the Severn). The questions and possibilities they raise however are universal and cross-cultural.</p>
<b>Author name</b>	<b>Author affiliation</b>
Antony Lyons	Independent artist, Designer, Researcher

Short biographical notes of session organisers and presenters	
Bettina van Hoven	Bettina van Hoven is Associate Professor of Cultural Geography at the University of Groningen. Bettina's interests largely fall under the umbrella of belonging and identities. She is specifically interested in how and why different (groups of) people form attachments to places and includes the role of non-human actors in her research. She is a keen experimenter with various qualitative methods. Her current work is on geographies of older adults. She also keeps rather busy with the organisation of the Emotional Geographies conference .
Rose Ferrabi	<a href="http://jurassicresearch.wordpress.com/">http://jurassicresearch.wordpress.com/</a>
Owain Jones	Dr. Owain Jones is Reader in cultural geography: landscape, place and environment at the Countryside & Community Research Institute. Owain specialises in nature-society relations, place and landscape, community and resilience, the role of memory, nonhuman agencies, and temporalities of landscape. He is currently researching into tidal landscapes, and community, memory, flooding and resilience in Arts and Humanities Research Council and Economic and Social Research Council projects. He has an arts background and collaborates with artists frequently. He has published a number of peer reviewed papers on the above subjects, and has a new edited book entitled "Geography and Memory: Identity, Place and Belonging" being published in their Memory Studies Series in 2012. He has been recently elected onto the AHRC peer-review College, and also reviews grant applications for the ESRC. He was nominated by his academic peers to take part in the international benchmarking review of UK Human Geography which the Economic and Social Research Council has commissioned in partnership with the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. He is currently supervising 3 Phds.
Rona Lee	<a href="http://www.ronalee.org">www.ronalee.org</a>
Antony Lyons	Independent artist, Designer, Researcher With a background in environmental geo-sciences and landscape design, many of Antony's projects are concerned with explorations of place and reconnections to natural processes and

	<p>cycles. His research and production methods rely on open-ended creative fieldwork and experimental remixing of archives, recordings, data and contemporary narratives. This creative terrain is situated within a continuum of ecological research/design and art practice. The localities of enquiry are often those that form 'connective tissue' - pathways, waterways, greenways, watersheds, coastlines. Resulting works includes sculpture, film/sound and immersive installations - all examining the interplay of tensions, traces and transitions within landscape settings; always holding multiple meanings and involvements. Collaborative ensembles include Deiseal (based in Ireland), and NOVA (in the UK).</p>
Veronica Vickery	<p>Veronica is an artist who is currently undertaking an art-practice-based PhD in human geography at the University of Exeter, based in the Environment and Sustainability Institute in Cornwall. She is also a lecturer in site-based performance practices at Falmouth University, a member of LAND<sup>2</sup> artist network, part of the PLaCE research consortium and a co-director of BOSarts, an artist-led partnership with the National Trust in West Cornwall which initiates and commissions projects in response to place.. An artist with a multi-modal way of working, Veronica works in cycles that move through performative process, recording using drawing, photography and digital media, and painting enquiry.</p> <p><a href="http://www.veronicavickery.co.uk">www.veronicavickery.co.uk</a></p>