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Bears and Scents of Place in Sid Marty's *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek*

Pamela Banting

pbanting@ucalgary.ca
ORCID: 0000-0001-5477-0412

University of Calgary, Canada

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ABSTRACT

Most Western humans think of more-than-human animals as having certain spatial requirements adequate to their needs to feed, reproduce and survive but assume that their territorial needs are more or less generic and interchangeable. In his acclaimed literary nonfiction book *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek* (2008) Sid Marty represents the spaces and places of two bears, a black bear and a grizzly bear. In this animal biography cum forensic account of a series of bear attacks upon humans in Banff, Alberta, Canada, during eleven days in 1980, Marty reconstructs the events by researching the particular bears and interviewing the wardens involved, and factoring in the climatic and environmental forces – particularly the eruption that spring of Mount St. Helens and the concomitant alteration of weather patterns and plant growth as far away as Banff, Alberta – that led to the unusually high number of tragic bear-human encounters that summer. I argue that *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek*, several chapters of which Marty writes in the third-person as if from the points of view of each of the two individual bears involved, allows us to explore how we might think of bears' and by extension other more-than-human animals' senses of place and exemplifies how literary works can play a role in coming to understand more fully the lives of some of our animal relations. I argue that bears' tremendous olfactory senses are so indelibly connected with their familiar surroundings as to constitute a veritable "scents of place."

Keywords

bears; olfaction; animals' sense of place; territory and range; the politics of eating; Sid Marty

Every animal knows way more than you do.

–Lavine Williams, Koyukon teacher, quoted in Barry Lopez,
Embrace Fearlessly the Burning World: Essays

1. Introduction

The outpouring of recent research on the ontology and epistemology of more-than-human animals has taken us a long way toward greater understanding of our fellow Earth creatures. However, explorations of such animals' being and knowledge (and not just our relationships with and knowledge of them) often run aground on the shoals of anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism. If a more-than-human animal trait is one shared with humans, then contrary to logic and common sense that trait is often regarded either as *exclusively* human or one that it is simply impossible to know animals share. As Marcus Bullock writes, "[t]hat steadfast refusal to see expressiveness anywhere [other than in humans] merely becomes another species of anthropomorphism, should we turn so intently against the other temptation as to insist on hearing only silence and seeing only empty matter in the language of animal forms" (112). While in many instances human intentions and human affects can also only be inferred, and sometimes they too can seem incomprehensible or unmotivated—it is another form of anthropocentrism to hold as one's premise that human psyches, even one's own by oneself, are understood—nevertheless more-than-human animals typically function as a limit-case when it comes to ontology and epistemology. The dominant paradigm claims that we do not and cannot know anything about their *Umwelten*.

2. Animal Geographies

When western humans think about more-than-human animals we tend to think of them in terms of their unique identifying traits: their physical appearance and a set of scientifically observed and ascribed characteristics and behaviours. We think of them occupying specific habitats or ecological niches and going about their lives—being born and raised, leaving the nest or burrow or den, and then reproducing and raising their own young in turn—within the confines of territories or ranges that supply no more than the basics of life. That is, as virtually any field guide or nature documentary demonstrates, we tend to think of other animals' occupation of space mostly in terms of access to the simple bare necessities of water, food, relative safety, and shelter. In terms of

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, we reserve "sense of belonging" and other higher needs exclusively for ourselves. In truth, we seldom think of animals as having a sense of belonging. We tend to think of them in terms of relatively abstract philosophical and scientific notions such as space, ecology or ecological niche, habitat, range, and territory but not in terms of their having a sense of place, even though it is probable that more-than-human animals have a far greater knowledge of and relationships with the particularities of their respective territories than we do of our own. It is almost as if we deploy such abstract notions of spatiality as a way of rooting them out of and appropriating the fields, meadows, fens, coulees, valleys, mountainsides, swamps, and especially the prime real estate they occupy. Through manoeuvres such as this, we draw them out of their geographical places and into rhetorical and theoretical places in our own minds. During my research for this and other articles on the nonfiction of Sid Marty and other bear experts, it became evident that even a significant number of articles in the field of animal geographies that contain the word *place* in their titles or abstracts treat animals' places as rhetorical places or philosophical and cultural placements rather than physical, material locations.

The converse is also true. Anthropocentrism also comes into play in our assumption that humans' senses of place are not related to nurture or satisfaction of our basic Maslovian needs. Widespread privilege has eroded our ability even to notice, let alone appreciate, either the built or the natural infrastructure that supplies those needs.[1] While knowing the particulars of one's territory is not necessarily tantamount to possessing a sense of place, which implies a sense of belonging to or in that zone constructed out of memories, associations, affects, and perhaps even nostalgia or solastalgia, there is sufficient cause to extrapolate from animals' superb navigational and threat-avoidance capabilities based on their precise and deep knowledge of the geographies they inhabit at least to explore the possibility that they may also have place-attachments.[2]

A corresponding absence in most of our philosophical and cultural figurations of animals is the notion of the specificity of individual animals' lives, a

1. For an eye-opening examination of the ways in which North American privilege has radically obscured our awareness and knowledge of infrastructure, see Harold Fromm's article.
2. In my article on walking with caribou I argue that locomotion can serve as a bridge to understanding between species, even between ungulates and humans, four-legs and two-legs. In that paper, I drew in part upon Hayden Lorimer's article "Herding Memories of Humans and Animals" in which he demonstrates that "Signature events, or distinguishable traits, in the biographies of reindeer [caribou] are made memorable, at least in part, by virtue of their setting.… On the basis of these retold stories [about individual reindeer's place-attachments] we can establish that living creatures have a sense of place and, by their repeated actions, afford place some of its most significant qualities" (502).

lack I would link to our scepticism about their senses of place. We imagine our furry compatriots living lives rendered typical, almost allegorical, by virtue of our sense that they have no sense of place as it is only emplaced lives in which history, event or context can develop.[3] That is, we simply presume that a Richardson's ground squirrel lives the life story of a type, a Richardson's ground squirrel, not of a Richardson's ground squirrel in the city of Calgary or one in Grasslands National Park in semi-remote southern Saskatchewan. Even those of us who recognize that humans have profound and differential historical effects upon other animals' lives—through sport hunting, factory farming and slaughter for fur or food, habitat depletion, bitumen mining, and countless other practices—and critique such practices tend to strand more-than-human animals in the zones of the typical and the timeless,[4] a move that probably has more to do with our own impulse toward abstraction and less to do with their lives. Bear Awareness Pamphlets, for instance, tell us what to do in the event of being approached or attacked by a black bear as opposed to a grizzly bear. While there is strong scientific validity to such categorizations and avoidance tactics, individual bears' distinct histories also shape their temperaments, moods, lives, the lives of their offspring, and their situational responses.

In this essay I propose to look at representations of bears somewhat less in terms of ontology (who or what they are) or epistemology (what they know or do not know but we do know) but in terms of their senses of place (whether and how they might conceive of or feel where they are). That is, I postulate that place is an important variable not only in terms of bears' fundamental survival but also a strong constituent in the specificity of their lives and the events that happen to them. While admittedly this is largely unknowable and even while fully recognizing that any given animal's, group's, or species' place or sense of place is not necessarily similar to that of a human animal, and that animals occupy, in Nigel Thrift's words, "what are often radically different umwelten" (156), I think it worth at least considering the question in the hope that it will lead us to possible insights about the lives of other creatures.

In addition to the problem of scepticism about animal intelligence and range of affect, and the difficulty of knowing what it is like to be a bat, a tick, or a weasel, there are many significant obstacles to considering animals' sense of place. For present purposes it may be sufficient simply to present an overview here. Most obviously, contemporary North American society tends to denigrate the importance of place-attachments in human lives, so it could fairly be

3. The exceptions include animals in animal biographies and the realistic wild animal story.
4. Erica Fudge addresses the question of animals' histories.

regarded as odd to reflect at length on animals' senses of place. Secondly, though not unrelatedly, as economist Geerat J. Vermeij writes,

> An ever-increasing proportion of biologists has grown up in suburbs and cities, where highly artificial venues—gardens, zoos, petri dishes, and laboratory cages—are the chief meeting places between people and other living things. Most of us encounter organisms and their remains far from places in which those creatures lived and evolved, with the inevitable result that we cannot easily envision the problems and opportunities that living things face on an everyday basis. (39)

As a corollary to the increasing extirpation of our own experiences with animals in their habitats,[5] the prestige of scientific discourse is such that increasingly we consciously or subconsciously associate animals' spaces not only with the wild but also or even more so with the zoo, observation platform or blind, laboratory, cage, box, maze, documentary film, and other scientific and cultural apparatuses. In the popular mind, animals have become experimental objects of the scientific gaze. Vermeij also suggests that one outcome of the increased focus on molecular biology and genetics has been to reduce organisms to collections of markers (40). To scientists hoping to discover universal principles, he writes, context (time and place) "is a hindrance to the recognition of deeper truths and patterns" (41). Moreover, natural history is often marginalized as an antiquated, amateur, and denigrated area of endeavour peripheral to science.[6] However, contradictorily, scientific explanations of animal behaviour that are careful to bracket intentionality and the notion of animal minds nevertheless do not hesitate to construct animals as either frugal or extravagant economic subjects—the frugal ones always defaulting to the line of least resistance, conserving energy, maximizing potential return on the basis of the least investment (the taming of the shrewd). Given that, as Deborah Tall argues, at least in the North American context, the social construction of economic humans typically denigrates place-attachments precisely in order to maintain a highly mobile

5. See Robert Michael Pyle's work on how local extirpations and extinctions of species result in a corresponding extinction of our own experiences.
6. Vermeij continues: "Molecular biology routinely dismissed classification and anatomy as stamp collecting, as the descriptive accumulation of trivia. Controlled experiments, inspired by Karl Popper's contention that the only good science is hypothesis-driven experimental science, crowded out investigations that were based on observation, comparative studies, and historical reconstruction. Experiments by their nature are executed at small spatial scales and on very short time scales, meaning that phenomena of larger magnitudes were often off limits to those who took Popper too seriously" (40).

workforce,[7] such a construction would seem to apply to our thinking about more-than-human animals too. Finally, though not exhaustively, as Thrift writes, "[t]he problem, of course, is that, as Derrida has pointed out at length, 'animal' covers a very large range of different kinds of affects, sufficient to make it possible to question the very category itself. 'Animal' is clearly not a satisfactory descriptor. . ." (156).

The variable of *place* can be just as vaguely referential as the term *animal*. So much intellectual energy is devoted to deconstructing more-than-humans' *place* in our own rhetoric, ontologies, and epistemologies that their physical, material, geographical locations are often overlooked even by those fighting for their welfare and their rights to their lives. I would suggest that this is also because a great deal of animal studies scholarship is devoted to pets and other domestic animals whose *place* can be taken for granted as being the same dwelling or property as their human companions. Finally, the other category to which a lot of fascinating research is devoted is to representations of animals in human-made artworks or artworks made in collaboration between humans and more-than-human animals. The *places* in such research are the canvas, paper, photograph, painting, sculpture, film, performance space, or exhibition.

3. Bears' Sense of Place

In what follows then, I will analyze writer Sid Marty's representation of the senses of place of two individual bears in his acclaimed literary nonfiction book *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek* (2008).[8] In this animal biography cum forensic account of a series of bear attacks upon humans in Banff, Alberta, Canada, during the summer of 1980, Marty reconstructs the events in exhaustive detail by researching the particular bears, interviewing the wardens, a victim, and others who were involved, and incorporating into the narrative the environmental and climatic forces both within and distant from the Banff area, namely, the eruption

7. Tall writes that "we are awash in a landscape of mobility that eschews connection to particular plots, has no need or desire for great distinction between places, and is essentially utilitarian about the land, often lacking environmental conscience. Place has come to mean proximity to highways, shopping, and year-round recreation, rather than natural situation or indigenous character" (106).

8. Sid Marty is a highly respected environmental nonfiction writer, poet and singer-songwriter. In addition to *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek* (2008), see, for example, his *Leaning on the Wind: Under the Spell of the Great Chinook* (1995) and *Switchbacks: True Stories from the Canadian Rockies* (1999). His latest book, *Oldman's River: New and Collected Poems,* was published in Spring 2023 by NeWest Press.

of Mount St. Helens and the concomitant alteration of weather patterns that spring and summer[9] that led to the unusually high number of tragic bear-human encounters that summer. Several chapters of *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek*, the title of which gestures toward the idea that bears' identities have a place-based component, are written in third person *as if* from the points of view of the grizzly bear or black bear. In his prefatory author's note, Marty acknowledges that his attempt at telling parts of the story from the point of view of a bear "is obviously an imaginative exercise, rather than reportage" (n.p.), his "best guess," but one based on his experience as a park warden and then a journalist who has in the writing of the book "tethered" his imagination to the evidence uncovered.

The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek illuminates how we might begin to think of bears' sense of place and exemplifies how a work of literary nonfiction can play a significant role in extending our understanding of the importance of specific places—and not solely habitat and range—to some of our animal kin. Although the book is named after one of its main actors, an anomalously black brown bear or grizzly, the book is devoted about equally to Bear 054, at 350 pounds an unusually large black bear for the eastern slopes of the Rockies (170). Both bears then are atypical, not interchangeable representatives of their respective species, most importantly in terms of their colour and size. The tension, suspense, and narrative pull of the book depend largely on the mystery as to which species of bear, *and* which individual bear, mauled a fisherman, a tourist, and a drifter in the summer of 1980 a mere five hundred metres outside the resort town of Banff,[10] a summer when the berry crop failed and garbage management practices in the park were weak and under-enforced.

However, despite his important disclaimer that "No one can say with any certainty what goes on in the mind of a bear" (author's note, n.p.), what is truly remarkable about the book is Marty's seeming ability to do just that, to write his way into the points of view and lives of each of the two different bears. For instance, chapter six opens with a description of bear roads, trails that "tunnel through the krummholz and slide alder where most people stop, baffled, unwilling to get down on all fours and crawl, unsure of their welcome in that hedged darkness" (61). Bear roads are an important part of bear infrastructure. Both the map and the territory, "They are roads of ancestral knowledge, passed on from the mother bear to the cubs, imprinted in the brain to be recalled later, perhaps some years after the cubs have dispersed, maybe long after the siblings

9. Banff is about 465 air miles northeast of Mount St. Helens (45).
10. Actually, as Sid Marty writes, "five people were attacked during an 11-day rampage" (7) in 1980.

have gone their separate ways. Mothers and cubs might meet again on those roads, and recognize each other, and pass each other by without doing harm" (61). The trails are maps, sites of both contemporary and ancestral knowledge, spaces of détente, and political spaces. Bears also maintain the infrastructure along their roads: "Here a hole in the path marks where a boulder the size of a small car was grappled and shoved out of the way, and sent rolling down the mountain like local thunder" (61). Their roads also include amenities such as spots where "the traveller beast can stretch out and rub its back and cool off in the icy slush for a moment below a boiling of frustrated deer flies" (62). A bear road may also curve from time to time through a scenic mossy gulch "where a brook purls down the mountain to form a pool of icy water in which a bear may stop to bathe its hot, cracked footpads in the mud while slaking its thirst" (62). Clearly, the roads function as more than linear, efficient, energy-saving, and economical routes from A to B. In fact, one of the most remarkable features of a bear road is that the individual tracks within it can be as much as a foot deep and a foot or more long: "These tracks were made over the centuries by the padded humanoid feet of bears that journey between mountain ranges; each has put its front foot and then the corresponding rear foot down in the same print the first of its tribe made here centuries before" (62). Whether fear of detection, the ease of passage, good business sense, smearing one's own odour with that of predecessors, ritual affirmation of their old paths and old ways, acknowledgement of tribal (or what we call species) identity, tribute to the ancestors, demonstration of solidarity or reciprocity, practice marking bears' special sense of time, pure habit, or all or none of above, we cannot know, but suffice to say the bear roads and the bears' practice of placing their feet precisely in the prints of precursor bears is an important component of bears' sense of place.[11]

Of course, bears' sense of place encompasses more than their tracks and trails.[12] In the first chapter written in third-person singular *ursus*, "Sticky Mouth Awakes," Marty imagines the bear being roused in his winter den by a slight thunder and trembling of the mountain on the day Mount St. Helens erupts. Marty speculates about the bear's day-to-day consciousness of place: "For him the mountain must seem like a living thing because it provides both food and

11. In their work with the brown bears of Kamchatka in eastern Russia, Charlie Russell and Maureen Enns noticed the same phenomenon of bears placing their feet precisely in the footprints of other bears who had used the trail before. For images of bear roads, see chapter one, "Discovering Kamchatka 1994 - 96," of their photography book *Grizzly Seasons*.
12. For more speculation on tracks, trails, maps, inscriptions, and co-writing with more-than-human animals, see my chapter "Magic is Afoot: Hoof Marks, Paw Prints and the Problem of Writing Wildly."

drink all summer long from alpine meadow to valley bottom, and it speaks to him with the voice of water, with the voice of wind and the voice of the falling rock and snow" (55). The mountain provides shelter and safety during the long months of winter torpor, as well, perhaps, as companionship as in this passage. It risks stating the obvious and sounding ridiculous, but in Marty's "best guess," and against the pervasive background of western humanism, it may be worth suggesting that the bear has an animistic sense of place.

While it is not true, as popularly held, that bears have poor eyesight, according to Marty's representations of them bears are far more governed by the senses of smell and taste than by sight.[13] As he writes,

> According to researcher Dr. George Stevenson, a grizzly bear can smell seven times better than a hound dog, which in turn smells 300 times better than we do. Sniffing at a spot where a man had urinated, or just following a human trail through the bush with his nose until he was close enough to look at the man he was following (bears see in colour), helped him later to picture the man associated with that particular smell; perhaps one had more garlic in his urine, one had more fat cells. (235)

4. Bears' Olfactory and Gustatory Senses

Bears do more than just scent the presence or absence of a smell: they subject their samples to a rigorous analysis, extracting and absorbing a level of detailed information of which any laboratory technician would be envious, and then link that odour and its analysis to the visual appearance of the person who emitted it. Just as Marty conducts a forensic analysis of the scenes of terrible injury and harm, a bear conducts its own forensics including the equivalent of lab work using just the evidence of its nose and eyes. Sticky Mouth can *see* for kilometres with his nose; his nostrils pose his questions to the air. Following the first bear attack on a human described in the book, the smell of human blood suddenly floats on the air, and Sticky Mouth "rears up on his hinders, whiffles air into his nares, trying to scent it, to see it. An enticing tang of musky underling stink rewards his inquiring nose" (107). He too seeks an answer as to which bear is responsible, and courtesy of his acute olfactory sense he easily obtains that information that eludes the diligently searching wardens.

13. Although he does not discuss bears, Ed Yong's book *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* offers a fascinating overview of the senses of numerous more-than-human animals. Chapter One is about smells and tastes.

For bears, odour serves as a mnemonic, and it underwrites a sensory map of place. Marty writes that olfactory and gustatory associations combined are a powerful *aide-mémoire* for bears:

> When it comes to finding food, grizzly bears have very good memories. The cub learns where the berry patches are by following at its mother's heels. Likewise, it recalls avalanche slopes where winter-killed goats and bighorn sheep may be found melting out of the snow in spring. A bear remembers picnic grounds where it successfully stole a camper's lunch, or garbage dumpsters that were once left open. We wardens found that once a bear was successful in obtaining human food, its memory of that success drew it back to an area again and again. (30)

Bears' maps are not scalar visual abstractions of a given area (a bird's eye view, an airplane's flyover or a satellite's survey), as ours are: they are redolent with smells. It follows that if bears have very good memories for the locations of food sources, then they have very good memories for locations. In these instances, food functions as a draw and a memory trigger, but it would be difficult to separate memories of food from those of the places where it has been found. That is, a bear's place memory includes but goes beyond places associated with food. It would be unrealistic to think that their memory of a particularly productive camping spot is full of highly pixelated locational detail whereas the rest of their domain is just a myopic blur akin to a very faded or old photograph. Describing how B054 eludes the wardens who are searching for the bear that injured the fisherman, in the following passage Marty depicts the bear's knowledge of terrain that has no evident connection with eating:

> He was completely at home in the forest, a maestro of the shintangle who shambled through willow hells with Olympian detachment, where men could only curse and crawl. It is quite likely he knew the terrain more intimately than his hunters, and even if he had last moved through it years earlier, he would have remembered it far better than the humans, such was the map of the mountains imprinted on his neurons. (122)

In this light, to presume that bears have no sense of place and no place-attachments and can make a living anywhere there is forest or grassland is misguided thinking. Moreover, thinking with bears about the notion of sense of place is an excellent way of remembering that sense of place is a sensuous construct. That is, sense of place is far more than one's home address, general latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates, or merely familiar geography: it is the place where all of one's senses have been at least intermittently open and alive to that location from the degree of humidity or dryness of the air, to the quality of the sunshine,

the strength of the prevailing winds, the shapes of the typical clouds, the appearance and smell of the vegetation, the other animals in that country, and so much more.[14]

To illustrate bears' olfactory prowess, Marty poetically encapsulates the effects of the odours of human food on the grizzly. Some of his olfactory and gustatory descriptions are surprisingly evocative, even if one does not share bears' taste for rotten carcasses of winter-killed moose (60) or rancid, insect-riddled garbage:

> The intoxicating scent of restaurant scraps tickles Sticky Mouth's nose. It smells as though a great dead beast, half beef cow and half fish, is fermenting in a vat of spoiled fruit, rancid butter and deep-fry fat, perfuming the atmosphere with its captivating putrescence. He lies quietly, his nose made drunk with excess aroma… His nostrils flare at the rancid joys; his stomach sings hosannahs. (79)

Tantalized by those delights, Marty writes, Sticky Mouth "moans with hyperphagic anticipation, aching to gorge and gorge again on flesh" (80). Marty not only states that at this stage of the season the bear's dietary preferences are for meat and fat, all the better to prepare for months of winter torpor; his insight into the affects associated with the physical urgency of hyperphagia are highly convincing and illuminating: "Every day he is growing fatter and more powerful and every day he feels the need to be bigger still" (63). The putrefying, odorous steak and lobster leftovers from a popular Banff restaurant ("cowfish" to the bear, in Marty's rendering) imbue the bear with "an exquisite torment." Sticky Mouth "pictures writhing legions of sweet, nut-flavoured maggots; recalls the zesty crunch of carrion beetles on his palate…" (75). Marty depicts the bear's all-consuming urge to feed by elaborating with Rabelaisian excess and delight on the esculent and excellent delights to a bear of human food and bears as ursine gourmands in their own terms. Sticky Mouth even desires to eat B054, whom he trees at one point: "Fat! He does not have a name for it, but he knows it when he smells it. He craves and aches and swoons for the taste of it" (83).[15]

14. See Don Gayton's essay "Primal" in his book *Landscapes of the Interior: Re-Explorations of Nature and the Human Spirit* for a description of humans' attachments to our primal landscapes.
15. For more on bears' and other animals' relation to fat, grease, blubber, and oil, see my chapter on "Anim-Oils: Wild Animals in Petro-Cultural Landscapes."

5. Eating and Consumption

Thinking through the act and the politics of eating from the grizzly bear's point of view Marty directs his inquiry in turn to the consumption patterns of our own species, asking "What is a car, or an ATV, or a motor home, if not a device for eating up space and time by displacing the natural world from out of our path as we speed from A to B? We are not savouring our time on this earth, we are cramming it down our craws at a ravenous pace.… We North Americans have the appetites of gods" (19). We stalwartly maintain that *we* are the eaters, not the eaten: "Our flesh is not for the eating…" (19). It is our disproportionate appetite for and consumption of virtually everything—even space and time—that "we will not admit to and what the bear cannot understand about us that leads to tragedy" (19). Because the bear is so much stronger than we are, he fails to realize "that humans, not bears, are the gods of eating and occasionally it decides to eat one of us either literally, which is rare, or figuratively in the form of a bear mauling" (19). Because we behave as if we are gods, not mammals like Sticky Mouth a.k.a. Our-Brother-Across-the-River,[16] it can be a startling realization when we hear of a bear attack, because for a while we are dragged "back down out of the clouds, back down into our basic mammalian reality" (19). North American humans maintain a year-round, not just seasonal, hyperphagia as we joylessly, albeit relentlessly, smugly and self-satisfyingly, consume and cannibalize the Earth.

Throughout the book Marty illustrates connections between smell and the drive to eat with bear knowledge, bear epistemology. For the black bear, B054, however, humans and our food also carry knowledge of our greed and impecuniousness and his fear and trauma. For B054 "the smell of them [humans] made him think always of their meat-hoards and sweet-hoards" (92). Because B054 has been tranquillized, trapped and relocated more than once, by metonymic association with human smell he has a harrowing flashback: "He saw that picture now, and felt the fear again.… He remembered it [a helicopter] carrying him off; remembered feeling weightless over a void, followed by the silences of a strange country where he wandered in confusion" (92). B054's

16. The ordinary name for the bear in southern Blackfoot, *Pah'-ksi-kwo-yi*, translates as Real Bear or Sticky Mouth (Marty 9). Another Indigenous euphemism deployed to avoid using its sacred appellation is Our-Brother-Across-the-River (22). In connection with my argument about eating, it is interesting to note that in some Indigenous cultures that Marty does not specify "When a man killed a bear, he had to be extremely observant of elaborate rituals to propitiate its proud and vengeful spirit. If treated without proper honours, it might counsel the other animal spirits to deny their flesh to such ungrateful hunters for a time" (22). Such a view understands the grizzly bear to be the controller of eating.

craving for human food results in hostile encounters with us, which lead to his being transported far from his home range. However, his traumatic memories of those events[17] result not in his becoming "ecologically correct" (34) again by returning to a diet of carrion, roots, berries, and forbs, but in his learning that the two-legged "naked bears" (92) have a propensity to protect their food hoards and even their discards through violence, entrapment and exile to a place where he does not know his way nor does he know the local bears in whose territory he suddenly and unexpectedly finds himself, where he suffers a loss of local knowledge and feelings of displacement, estrangement and fear, where, in other words, he suffers a lack of sense of place. Such knowledge is not transitory; it resurfaces in association with the smells of humans and our food and triggers powerful affects: "There was a dread in his brain, dread and simmering fury. He moaned in rage" (92).

In their article "The Smell of Nature: Olfaction, Knowledge and the Environment," Daniel Press and Steven C. Minta argue that "olfaction offers unique entry into the non-human world" (173). However, regrettably, "Western culture constrains such an opportunity because of the dominance of the visual mode of perception and its attendant reliance on language for cognition." In their brief survey of the privileging of sight over other senses, Press and Minta suggest that "Unlike the purely subjective senses of smell and taste, those of sight, touch and hearing lend 'an empirical thrust' to the perceptions of external objects. In the act of seeing, one remains oneself: in the act of smelling, one dissolves" (174). This dissolution or partial dissolution of self may describe what the bears experience as their physiological need to gorge ramps up over the summer. (It may also account for some of the moans they emit in the text). Moreover, because bears have extremely powerful senses of smell, their imprinting on locations where they find a banquet must be extraordinary. Imagine for a moment the agonies you would suffer if your longing to dine at your favourite restaurant or to eat a certain meal were compounded by a factor of, say, three hundred times (which would still only make you a hound dog) and then seven times more (bear). When one thinks of a bear's sense of smell, one can only conclude that they must not only be maestros of the shintangle with an astonishing knowledge of place but also absolute zen masters of restraint and control for not just walking into our grocery stores to feed or into restaurants and devouring the buffet special. With the failure of the wild berry crop in 1980 due to the weather conditions created by the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the bear experiences what we would call uneasiness or anxiety in a human: "This

17. B054 seems to have suffered capture myopathy, the terror of being flown over a great abyss in a helicopter sling, and possibly an unfriendly reception in other bears' territory.

lack of fruit makes him uneasy; he has experienced this loss before and he recalls it as a relentless hunger followed by a long, restless sleep" (75).

While we contemporary resource-exploiting, pell-mell humans with our exponentially weaker sense of smell usually think of odours as extremely transitory, Press and Minta state that in fact "Scent glands allow long-lasting messages that operate in the sender's absence" (177). Scents not only provide signs that may be read and comprehended, but they may be read, like handwriting or print, in the sender's absence. Although far more ephemeral than writing of course, scent persists in the environment long enough to be read by those who need to be in the know and far longer than speech utterances. Furthermore, also like writing, smell is capable of transmitting character studies and narrative elements: details such as age, size, sex, ability and willingness to defend one's territory, dominance or submission, social status, and other details are discernible from scent (178).

6. Conclusion

To the extent that smells disarm, transgress boundaries, and threaten subjects with dissolution (even with being eaten by and becoming one's predator),[18] exploring bears' 'scents of place' furthers our understanding of the specificity of their lives, opens wider the field of our potential relations with them, and teaches us what a highly developed sense of place can be. Smells—both noxious or unpleasant ones, as well as comely or intoxicating ones—can appall, humble, delight, and enlighten us and may even make us realize eventually that it is not the lingering and fraught questions of language and mind that separate us from other animals. The humanist obsession with language and mind as dividing lines between us and all other animal species overshadows knowledge about the senses, especially but not only olfaction and gustation and the insights they provide. As Christopher J. Preston writes, a non-anthropocentric epistemology "refuses to let knowledge float free of its connections to

18. Of course, if one of the effects of being inundated by smells is the dissolution of the self, then the fear of being eaten, incorporated by and into the other animal, as philosopher James Hatley writes in his article on "The Uncanny Goodness of Being Edible to Bears," exponentially amplifies such fears: "The stalking bear's gaze reminds me that my flesh is not only my own but also a mode of becoming bear" (21). Hatley describes the moment of exchanging gazes with a bear: "In that look the claim of the animal to one's flesh makes relative one's own claim to oneself, or at least to one's body.… This gaze submits me to the flesh of the other such that my very body is revealed as the capacity to be the body of a bear, as well as that of a human" (21).

our embodied and embedded nature in the physical world" (xi). Smells, of course, can do no other than ground us in our bodies and our surroundings, the places from which they emanate. Learning about scent with bears as our teachers, as Sid Marty's *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek* allows us to do, can help us rethink place and develop a fuller relationship with places and rethink who we are as sensing animals. Truly becoming native to a place means coming to know the geography, ecology, habitat, range, and niche we share with more-than-human animals, coming to know ourselves as fellow creatures also in need of clean air and water, food, climate stability, and relative safety, and coming to a sense of belonging to the land rather than the ravenous, consumption-driven "gods" (19) we have become. To dwell in flourishing, life-sustaining, lively, animate landscapes, we must respect and learn from the animate lives and systems still present wherever we live during this, the Sixth Mass Extinction. One solution to the awfulness of everything that threatens almost all of earth's beings and becomings at this historical and ecological moment is to practice the art of attention, sometimes under the guidance of other forms of life. To pay attention with all of one's senses is to attend, to be present, to be on location. It is to understand that everything is awe-full.

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