

Perspective

The perspectives people have of places varies from person to person, culture to culture, and over time. The following article contains evidence from a range of sources to demonstrate these different perspectives.

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITIES



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Histories and Cultures

CONTENT AREAS



Geography



History



English

GENERAL CAPABILITIES



Intercultural Understanding



Critical and Creative Thinking



Personal and Social Capability

KEY CONCEPT

Perspective refers to the ways in which different individuals and/or groups view something such as a past or present issue, idea, event, development, place, process or interaction.

Australian Curriculum

SUPPORTING CONCEPTS

- › place and space
- › significance

GUIDING QUESTION

Why might people's connection to country affect their perspectives on, and responsibility for, a place?

This printed material is **to be used with Stone Tools – a Living Cultures multimedia curriculum resource** that can be found at www.theorb.tas.gov.au

The Living Cultures Stone Tools resource and this supplementary printed material have been designed to foster culturally responsive practice when learning about Tasmanian Aboriginal Histories and Cultures.

Introduction

Standing at a quarry site, Sharnie Everett says:

You wouldn't just be sitting here doing the one thing, there would be stories being told and culture being passed on, skills being shared and all those aspects of community and tribal life would be part of why you were here. You wouldn't just come here make a tool and go again. It would be a whole activity and learning experience.

Sharnie Everett, 2016

Sharnie is describing her perception of a particular place that extends beyond the physical evidence of stone tool making. We hear her perspective on the place she is in.



The knapping ground at Great Bay | Image: Dcnstrct Pty Ltd

Early European Perspectives

Like Sharnie, Europeans made observations on places, people and activities that give insights into their perspectives on place. These records included journal entries, letters, sketches and paintings.

The etching below is by Jacques Louis Copia. It was created from sketches made with reference to drawings made by members of the Baudin expedition, such as François Péron and Charles Alexandre Lesueur. It represents these men's perspectives on people and place at this time.



Peche des Sauvages du Cap de Dieman | TAHO

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- › What image of Tasmanian Aboriginal people is conveyed by Copia's etching?
- › Does it present a positive or negative impression of Aboriginal people in place?
- › What might this tell us about the French's perspectives on traditional Aboriginal life in Tasmania?

Sources and Perspectives on Place

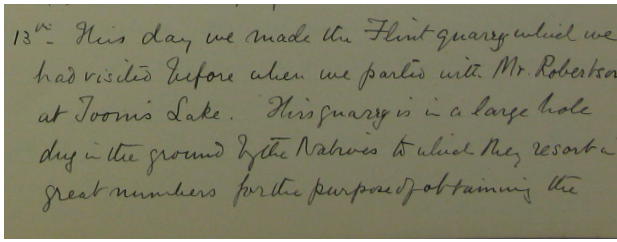
Below are several excerpts from *Into the Heart of Tasmania: A Search for Human Antiquity* which includes a number of accounts drawn from a range of primary sources that also appear below. These accounts relate to visits to quarry sites like the one that Sharnie is discussing.

On 13 August 1829, William Grant, the leader of one of the roving parties under the direction of Gilbert Robertson, had reached Kearney Bogs. He had found what he described as 'a large hole dug in the ground by the Natives'. This he knew was a place to which they resort in great numbers for the purpose of trimming the flint-stones wherewith to shape and make their

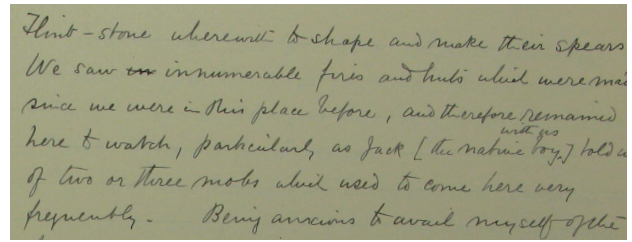
spears'. Grant had been there a month earlier with Robertson. He noted that 'innumerable fires and huts' had since been made and left by the Aborigines. Moreover his Aboriginal guide Jack (Jack Allan, or 'Batman's Jack') had told him that 'two or three mobs' visited the quarry 'very frequently'.

Taylor 2017: 138

Below is the primary source that Taylor used in the previous excerpt.



Pitt Rivers Museum: Manuscript Collections, Westlake Papers, Box 5, Number 10, Image 12, WEST00316

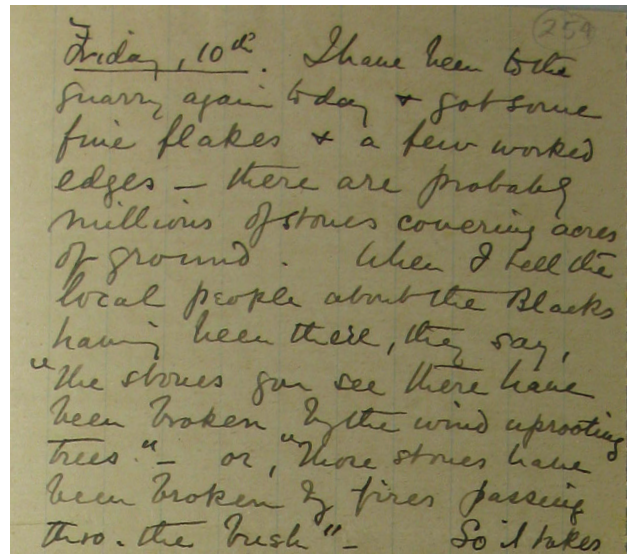


Pitt Rivers Museum: Manuscript Collections, Westlake Papers, Box 5, Number 10, Image 13, WEST00316

The following excerpt from *Into the Heart of Tasmania: A Search for Human Antiquity* is followed by the primary source; an entry from the Journals of Ernest Westlake who arrived in Hobart in 1908.

The evidence of years-long mining and stonework was obvious to Westlake. He was surprised when he spoke to the local people and they told him, 'the stones you see there have been broken by the wind uprooting trees' or, 'those stones have been broken by fires passing thro. the bush.

Taylor 2017: 140



Pitt Rivers Museum: Manuscript Collections, Westlake Papers, Folder 5a, Folios 204 - 271, Image 75, WEST00025

George Augustus Robinson, so-called conciliator of Aborigines, while undertaking the Friendly Mission (1829-1834), recorded his own observations of Aboriginal people's lives, culture, customs, and practices in his journals. A number of these entries offer insight into his perspectives on place.

The country or pass where I am encamped is called by umarrah pee.er.ret.ter. Saw numerous places where the natives had procured and had been splitting stones for the purpose of sharpening their spears.

19 October 1831

Robinson cited in Plomley 2008: 520

The whole of this country is peculiarly adapted for natives, consisting of thickly wooded hills and small open plains of grassy land which are surrounded with forest. There are open forest hills which abound with patches of grass, and afford shelter and food for the kangaroo. The

country about Campbell Town was formerly a favourite place of resort for the natives. Near to where I had encamped there was evident indications that natives had at one time made this their rendezvous: numerous trees had been barked for the purpose of constructing their huts, and sharp stones with which they had sharpened their spears were frequently picked up in the course of my journey. Some of those stones was fresh and had the appearance of their being used at a very recent period.

17 October 1831

Robinson cited in Plomley 2008: 519

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- › What could explain the differences in what people say they see when they are looking at the same thing?
- › What do these sources tell us about people's perspectives on place?
- › How might different perspectives affect people's actions?
- › What might this mean for our understanding of the Aboriginal history of place?

www.theorb.tas.gov.au/living-cultures/stonetools/teacher-drawer

REFERENCES

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<http://www.westlakehistory.info/viewer/WEST/item/WEST00316/13>

Peche des Sauvages du Cap de Dieman, s.n., 1800, Jacques Louis Copia, 1764-1799. 1 print: engraving; plmage size 240 x 388 mm. TAHO



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