Patrick Howard, PhD

Professor Emeritus of Education | Cape Breton University | Nova Scotia, Canada

patrick_howard@cbu.ca • www.patrickhoward.ca

Scholarly Profile

Patrick Howard is Professor Emeritus of Education at Cape Breton University, Canada. His scholarship brings phenomenology of practice into conversation with questions of pedagogy, language, literature, ecological relations, and lived experience.

His intellectual interests emerged through 26 years of teaching English language arts in Newfoundland and Labrador, where the relationships among language, culture, place, and the living world became enduring concerns. These questions led him toward phenomenological inquiry as a way of understanding how human beings experience and find meaning in their relationships with the world. He completed his doctoral studies at the University of Alberta under Max van Manen, whose work in hermeneutic phenomenology profoundly influenced his approach to educational research and writing.

Throughout his scholarly career, ecological and phenomenological questions have developed in close relation. His research has explored the possibilities of language and literature for cultivating ecological sensibility, the lived meanings of pedagogical experience, and the relational and ethical dimensions of education in a more-than-human world. His publications reflect a continuing concern with how education might deepen attentiveness to the worlds we inhabit and the others with whom we share them.

Increasingly, his scholarly attention has turned toward phenomenological inquiry itself, particularly the challenges and possibilities of learning to practice phenomenology. This interest informs his current doctoral teaching, editorial collaboration, and scholarly writing.

Academic Education

- PhD, Secondary Education, University of Alberta, 2006. Doctoral study under Max van Manen.
- Postgraduate Diploma in Education, University of Alberta, 1997. English Language Arts Methods.
- Master of Education (Teaching), Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1987.
- Bachelor of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1983.
- Bachelor of Arts (English), Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982.

Academic and Professional Appointments

- Professor Emeritus of Education, Cape Breton University, 2026.
- Professor of Education, Cape Breton University, 2020–2026.
- Interim Dean, School of Education and Health, Cape Breton University, 2020–2023.
- Associate Professor of Education, Cape Breton University, 2009–2020.
- Teacher and English Language Arts Department Head, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1983–2009.

Selected Publications

Books and Edited Collections

Karsgaard, C., & Howard, P. (Eds.). (Accepted for publication). *Bridging social and ecological justice*. ESWB Press.

Howard, P., Sævi, T., Foran, A., & Biesta, G. (Eds.). (2020). *Phenomenology and educational theory in conversation: Back to education itself.* Routledge.

O'Brien, C., & Howard, P. (Eds.). (2020). *Living schools: Transforming education*. ESWB Press.

Selected Journal Articles

Howard, P., Blenkinsop, S., & Piersol, L. (2026). Re-listening to the literal: Voice and consent in an eco-phenomenology of pedagogy toward a polyvocal Earth. *Phenomenology & Practice, 21*(1), 46–59. https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29625

Howard, P. (2021). Language-ing the Earth: Experiential renewal for a relationally sensitive environmentalism. *Phenomenology & Practice, 16*(1), 40–56. https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29500

Howard, P. (2020). Collaboration as a new creative imaginary: Teachers' lived experience of co-creation. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology, 19*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/20797222.2019.1684494

Howard, P. (2018). Twenty-first century learning as a radical re-thinking of education in the service of life. *Education Sciences, 8(*4), Article 189. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci8040189

Howard, P. (2018). "Deeper than even the grain goes": Attending to sound as pedagogical practice in Alphonso Lingis's The murmur of the world. *Phenomenology & Practice, 12*(2), 28–36. https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr29368

Howard, P. (2013). "Everywhere you go always take the weather with you": Phenomenology and the pedagogy of climate change education. *Phenomenology & Practice, 7*(2), 3–18. https://doi.org/10.29173/pandpr21165

Howard, P. (2011). Living as textual animals: Curriculum, sustainability and the inherency of language. Journal of the *Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies, 9*(1), 83–114. https://jcacs.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/jcacs/article/view/32097/31253

Howard, P. (2010). How literature works: Poetry and the phenomenology of reader response. *Phenomenology & Practice, 4*(1), 52–67. https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/pandpr/index.php/pandpr/article/download/19827/15345/0

Howard, P. (2010). Pedagogy and the poetic: Nurturing ecological sensibility through language and literature. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education, 15,* 185–197. https://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/article/view/1026

Selected Book Chapters

Howard, P. (2023). Living schools: Reframing education for future possibility. In *International encyclopedia of education* (Vol. 7, pp. 350–356). Elsevier.

Howard, P. (2020). Between having and being: Phenomenological reflections on having been educated. In P. Howard, T. Sævi, A. Foran, & G. Biesta (Eds.), *Phenomenology and educational theory in conversation: Back to education itself* (pp. 252–263). Routledge.

Howard, P. (2016). Phenomenology, education and the more-than-human world. In M. A. Peters (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of educational philosophy and theory.* Springer.

Howard, P. (2012). How literature works: Poetry and the phenomenology of reader response. In N. Friesen, T. Sævi, & C. Henriksson (Eds.), *Hermeneutic phenomenology in education: Method and practice.* Sense Publishers.

Doctoral Dissertation

Howard, P. (2006). *In search of a living literacy: Language, literature and ecological sensibility* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta]. University of Alberta Institutional Repository. https://ualberta.scholaris.ca/items/9f6d9018-c7b3-490d-8462-387179e8c0c3

Teaching and Graduate Mentorship

Howard's teaching career spans more than four decades, beginning with 26 years as an English language arts teacher and department head in Newfoundland and Labrador. This experience continues to inform his understanding of pedagogy as a relational and interpretive practice, attentive to the lived experiences of teachers and students.

At Cape Breton University, he taught in undergraduate teacher education and graduate programs, with particular interests in curriculum, language and literacy, ecological education, and sustainability. He co-developed the Master of Education in Sustainability, Creativity and Innovation program and contributed to the development of curricula oriented toward sustainability and ecological well-being.

His graduate teaching and supervision have encompassed master's theses and applied research projects addressing ecological literacy, outdoor and place-based education, sustainability, student well-being, and educational practice. He has also served as an external examiner for graduate research at Canadian and international universities.

Since 2024, Howard has co-taught Introduction to Phenomenological Research and Writing, a doctoral course at VID Specialized University in Norway, with Professor Tone Sævi, an internationally recognized scholar of phenomenological pedagogy and pedagogical relations. This collaboration reflects his growing interest in how researchers learn to practice phenomenology, develop attentiveness to lived experience, and cultivate phenomenological reflection and writing.

Editorial and Scholarly Contributions

Since 2010, Howard has served as co-editor of Phenomenology & Practice, an international, peer-reviewed, open-access journal devoted to phenomenological inquiry in the human sciences. His editorial work involves supporting scholarship attentive to lived experience, phenomenological reflection, and the methodological and philosophical traditions that inform phenomenology of practice.

His wider editorial contributions include co-editing special issues on creativity and ecological ethics, including a special issue of the McGill Journal of Education on creativity (2020). He previously served on the International Editorial Advisory Board of the McGill Journal of Education.

Howard has contributed to scholarly peer review and research assessment for journals, academic publishers, and funding agencies, including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Austrian Science Fund, and the Trans-Atlantic Platform for Social Sciences and Humanities.

His international scholarly engagement includes participation in the International Human Science Research Conference and collaborative work with researchers in phenomenology, educational theory, and ecological education. He has also contributed to organizing international scholarly conferences, including the 2014 International Human Science Research Conference in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and the 2016 International Outdoor Education Conference at Cape Breton University.

Current Scholarly Activities

Howard continues his scholarly work through phenomenological research and writing, doctoral teaching, editorial collaboration, and international academic engagement. His current interests centre on the teaching and learning of phenomenological inquiry, particularly how researchers develop attentiveness to lived experience, cultivate phenomenological insight, and find forms of writing responsive to the meanings of human experience.

Alongside this work, he maintains a continuing interest in ecological justice and the lived experiences of those affected by social and ecological inequities. His scholarship explores how phenomenological attentiveness to lived experience and our relations with the more-than-human world might contribute to critical understandings of ecological harm, vulnerability, and justice.

He is also developing the independent Phenomenology of Practice Project, an educational initiative offering introductory courses, scholarly conversations, and mentorship for graduate students, researchers, and practitioners interested in phenomenology of practice. The project reflects his commitment to creating opportunities for sustained engagement with phenomenological reading, reflection, and writing.