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Reviewer Biography

Dr Lorne Butt is the Sustainability Coordinator at TAFE NSW West Region. Lorne trained as a biologist before joining the higher education sector. With a background in quality management, strategic planning, and corporate governance, Lorne now specialises in sustainability practice, governance, education and research, and convenes the Leading for Innovation and Sustainability and Business Research Methods units in the Australian Institute of Management Business School postgraduate program. Lorne is an Associate Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders, and a member of the British and Australia/New Zealand academies of management, and the Australian Association of Environmental Educators.

Place in Research: Theory, Methodology and Methods

Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie New York, Routledge, 2015
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Reviewed by Susan Germein, Western Sydney University, Australia

As I engage with place research within a new materialist framework, this book by Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie is a valuable addition to my bibliography. In a world that is increasingly globalised, with neo-colonialist/neo-liberal/capitalist imbrications, theorisations of place research provide a welcome perspective.

We live in place and/or we carry place within us. Local places are where the global is made real: places are sites of resistance, emergence, renewal, and sustainable futures. Place is not just a passive setting for social science inquiry. As described in this book, it is, rather, alongside other non-human and human elements, agentic, and co-constitutive. ‘Social science research is always undertaken by researchers and participants embedded in *places*, places that are both local and global, shaped by and constitutive of culture and identity’ (p. 1).

Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie conceptualise place; interrogate methodology and methods of place such as posthumanism, new materialism, indigenous, and decolonising perspectives; and propose an ethics of place that serves the ecological futurity of human and other than human entities.

Critical place inquiry is defined in the book as:

research that takes up critical questions and develops corresponding methodological approaches that are informed by the embeddedness of social life in and with places, and that seeks to be a form of action in responding to critical place issues such as those of globalisation and neoliberalism, settler colonialism, and environmental degradation. (p. 2)

For the authors, the significance of place is particularly acute within indigenous perspectives, with reclamation of land or country as core to a decolonising project (p. 148). They see a critical approach as inherent in indigenous responses to the inherited loss caused by the historicities of colonialising capitalism. Indigenous and decolonising perspectives also speak to a strategy for futurity: resisting the neo-colonialism of globalising neo-liberal capitalism in all its externalising phases; addressing the injustices of climate change — economic, cultural, intergenerational, and interspecies; and resisting *Northern* theoretical hegemony, as articulated by Raewyn Connell (2007) in social science research (p. 29).

In what is at times an uneasy juxtaposition with other place-focused methodologies such as posthumanism/new materialism, Tuck and McKenzie warn that (with the exception of indigenous scholarship), these approaches don't necessarily result in a 'robust discussion' (p. 17) of place. They see a tendency towards a 'relatively narrow and depoliticised research gaze' (p. 104) in empirical socio-material research generally, and '... resist ontological analyses that, much like earlier phenomenological study, focus at the micro and yet universal level, while ignoring the situated realities of historical and spatial sedimentations of power' (p. 36). Committed to a critical perspective, the authors are more interested in what the research *does* (author italics) in the world rather than rather research as an exploration or performance of *what is* (reviewer italics).

The authors offer a typology of research paradigms, methodologies and methods in which to situate place-focused approaches. In offering such an heuristic, they also acknowledge the often eclectic, overlapping, and pragmatic use of such paradigms. They discuss a range of methodologies that focus on place and materiality; for example, narrative, ethnography, and participatory research.

The characteristics of indigenous methodologies in particular are seen as: relational integrity with each other and the environment; reciprocity as a cosmological and ethical underpinning; a notion of the *long view* (author italics); and an ongoing project of decolonisation (pp. 95–96). These commonalities speak strongly to critical aspirations for land, for connectedness, and for future generations.

Consonant with the idea of openness with methodology and methods, the authors frame a chapter on methods with a recounting of *dérive* (Débord, 1956): an observant drifting that is reminiscent of the 'hanging around' of ethnographic observation. The purpose of this and other methods discussed is to interact with place as integral rather than peripheral to the research.

The ensuing discussion of place research methods highlights visual, sensory, and temporal modes, as well as language-based approaches. A useful inclusion for a neophyte place researcher such as this writer is a detailed table of methods and sample works.

Inserting place into method is seen by the authors not as a matter of simply acknowledging it as background, but of including it as an organic, integral, and performative co-constituent of data. A simple example given is changing the location of an interview to yield different information and affect (p. 115). There is also a more complex and organic 'interweaving of place and story' (p. 120), through mappings and cartographies, recursive storytelling, dreams, sharing circles, and walking as indigenous research methods, with knowledge-making embedded in material performativity and relationality. With all of these sensibilities is an underlying ethics of accountability to community and place.

The authors differentiate indigenous research methods as being developed by or with indigenous people; drawing inspiration from tribal practices; having meaning for indigenous participants; and generating useful information for communities (p. 127).

Indigenous methods mentioned include storywork, shell mound work, mapping place-worlds, and place making. These unfold and refold not on the level of metaphor but in a dynamic entanglement of human and other than human. (Re)mapping, for example, is not about revisiting a 'static past', but about invoking an onward project of decolonisation, through a creative unsettling of 'colonial geographies' (pp. 134–135).

The authors describe a North American *awikhigan* (author italics) method: an assemblage using communicative artefacts such as maps, artworks or other objects as an organising point for diffusing and generating meanings. Interestingly, this indigenous approach seems redolent of new materialist methods critiqued elsewhere in this book. I therefore wonder if further theorisation would support a thesis of convergence as well as a divergence of indigenous methods with other socio-material methods.

So, what therefore makes methods uniquely indigenous? As well as the characteristics already mentioned earlier in this review, the authors refer us to three critical principles of: 'refusal' — a pushing back against the hegemonic status quo of knowledge production; the 'non-abstraction' of land, with land-based imperatives such as reclamation; and a serious commitment to 'Indigenous sovereignty' (pp. 146–149).

In a final chapter on ethics, Tuck and McKenzie characterise 'respectful and meaningful' (p. 160) research in place, with particular attention to the settler colonialist context. They propose a specific ethics of critical place inquiry, providing accountability to community and place, generations and species. They propose that critical place research is given legitimacy through the relational validity of its commitment to 'land, to social context, and to future generations' (p. 19). The authors, referencing Davies (2014) see ethical research in this context as being meaningful to the host community, and conducted through 'a relationship of respect and love'.

With this book, Tuck and McKenzie deliver on their promise of contributing to a richer theorisation of place, particularly in relation to indigenous and decolonising perspectives. I push back a little on their critique of new materialist approaches to place research, finding an inherent advocacy for place and an innate critical dimension in much new materialist research (McIntyre, 2003; Rautio, 2013; Renold & Ivinson, 2014). Indeed, Barad (2007) sees socio-materialist methods as 'part of critical theory's struggle to move beyond representation' (p. 46), noting for example, that 'First and foremost, as Haraway suggests, a diffractive methodology is a critical practice for making a difference in the world' (p. 90).

However, in the end, the authors' focus on indigenous and decolonising methodologies within a book on place research is apposite: Indigenous ways of knowing and being give an object lesson on how to inhabit place. The authors' writing into, across and between place methodologies makes a vibrant contribution to the field, whatever the critical orientation of the reader.

Tuck and McKenzie uncover important areas for further research: work that links materiality to critical questions of environment, economy and society; theorisations of space and place; as well as ongoing theorisation of place in research.

For me, this book provided a kind of textual *dérive*. I had to keep stopping to note a phrase for later interrogation, a reference to download and contemplate, a visceral response to note in my journal, and ideas to inform my own work. I consider it an invaluable companion text for anyone researching in place.

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Reviewer Biography

Susan Germein is a PhD Candidate at Western Sydney University. She has a research interest in community/place-based learning towards ecological sustainability. Susan has a background in Education for Sustainability, having worked as a sustainability educator in the vocational education and community sectors, developing, piloting and delivering EfS programs. She was part of a national team delivering the Sustainability Champions Program in Australia, the Vocational Graduate Certificate in Education and Training for Sustainability (Swinburne University), and other accredited professional development programs for vocational education practitioners.

Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: International Perspectives and Provocations

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Reviewed by Leissa Kelly, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia

Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: International Perspectives and Provocations is an edited collection of research narratives from internationally renowned scholars, researchers, and educators working within the field of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS).

The book originated when 'a small group of thoughtful people' were inspired to come together to share and discuss their ideas about research and theory in ECEfS. Their inspiration stemmed from conferences on Transnational Dialogues in Research in ECEfS. According to the editors, a key focus of these meetings was to explore the idea that young children were central 'as thinkers, problem-solvers and agents of change for