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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

Julie Davis and Sue Elliott (Editors) London, Routledge, 2014  
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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

sustainability' (p. 1). The end result was a manifesto that proposed a shift in current thinking by promoting an approach to ECEfS that saw children 'working authentically in the exploration of topics and issues' (p. 1) of sustainability that interested them. In this text the editors strongly advocate for children to work alongside their teachers, families, and communities in order to seek solutions and to take action that makes a difference in their local contexts.

The book itself is organised into three clusters comprised of chapters that share common themes. The first (and smallest) of these clusters is composed of three theoretically focused papers around the theme of ethics and values. In this cluster, the authors offer opportunities for deeper reflection on ECEfS by identifying core values and ethics in relation to children's rights, values, democracy, citizenship, and indigeneity.

The four chapters that make up the second cluster reflect on ECEfS with a focus on the historical and sociocultural contexts. In this cluster, the authors posit rethinking and reimaging ECEfS, drawing upon examples from their own countries, to discuss the importance of embedding indigenous and cultural perspectives. In doing so, the sometimes problematic nature of such inclusivity and the complex interrelationships that influence personal motivation and interest in addressing sustainability are highlighted. The role of the kindergarten as a vital arena for exploring these interrelationships is emphasised.

The third and final cluster comprises 12 chapters that are centrally focused on curriculum and pedagogy. This cluster offers insight into the many and varied transformative educational approaches to ECEfS that practitioners can adopt to strengthen their practices and to support children to become active citizens. Many of these methods are built upon already existing early childhood pedagogies, understandings and philosophical approaches, and adopt a co-constructive methodology inclusive of children, teachers, families, and the community.

The chapter authors (all active researchers in the field) derive from very different parts of the world, including Japan, Korea, Norway, New Zealand, Singapore, Sweden, and Australia. The global perspectives these scholars bring to their writings, combined with their personal experiences and research expertise, provide a rich analysis of this relatively new field. In this book of 19 chapters, the authors map the landscape of ECEfS and pave the way for further international dialogue and debate to occur.

*Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: International Perspectives and Provocations* is alive with actual examples of ECEfS programs and activities in practice, and does an admirable job of leveraging multiple case studies to highlight key concepts and critical areas of research.

The book asks more questions than it answers and, in this sense, is certainly provocative. Each chapter offers researchers and theorists in education for sustainability provocation to critically reflect on current paradigms and to rethink how ECEfS can significantly contribute to global sustainability. In doing so, gaps in understandings are identified and opportunities for further research highlighted, thereby paving the way for international dialogue and solidifying the authors' calls for further investment and action in early childhood education for sustainability.

The editors are mindful that one of the key limitations or constraints of this book is that it is written from a privileged position and that the represented authors 'offer primarily majority world perspectives' (p. 11). This does not, and should not, undermine the value of the text as a highly comprehensive and fundamental resource for developing ideas and perspectives in ECEfS.

Early childhood academics, educators for sustainability and environmental educators, practitioners, researchers involved or interested in early childhood, and 'those

whose primary interests lie in daily interactions with children, families and communities' (p. 3) will undoubtedly find this text of particular interest.

The editors have done an effective job in compiling a highly useful text that innovates as it educates. It is a book that is international in scope and is inclusive of contributions that embrace diverse theoretical frames and a range of methodological approaches, thereby setting the scene for exploring further ways forward and opening a transnational dialogue in ECEfS that is both provocative and exciting.

### Reviewer Biography

**Leissa Kelly** is a lecturer at Deakin University. She has been involved in environmental education and science research and practice, and in community and professional education and training for almost 30 years. Until now, her research has primarily focused on environmental education (particularly in regard to the marine environment); teaching and learning in higher education; how the environment is perceived and understood; how science is communicated; and the process of transition. She has recently completed a PhD in Marine Education, working with teachers and educators in the marine environment.

## Disasters and Social Resilience: A Bioecological Approach

Helen J. Boon, Alison Cottrell, and David King Routledge Explorations in Environmental Studies, 2016  
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Reviewed by Chris Harle, Australian Association of Social Workers, Sydney, Australia

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*Disasters and Social Resilience: A Bioecological Approach* proposes a theoretical framework and method for the study and research of disaster preparedness in individuals and communities. The title of this book immediately provoked my interest due to the promise of a model with potential to inform disaster resilience support programs. So it was with great interest that I delved into the book, authored by Helen J. Boon, Alison Cottrell, and David King. The authors are variously situated within the College of Arts, Society and Education (Boon) and the College of Marine and Environmental Sciences (Cottrell and King) of James Cook University in Queensland, Australia. As I work within the field of sustainability, including disaster preparedness, with a team of various academic backgrounds, I was encouraged to see the interdisciplinary background of the authors. Following the theme of this interconnectedness is the idea that in the context of a world increasingly threatened by the effects of climate change and subsequent increase in natural disasters, comprehensive modelling is required to assess the preparedness of individuals, communities, organisations, and governing bodies. There is limited ability to currently assess, measure, and monitor how each of these groups impact upon each other in regard to their ability to be resilient in the face of natural