

## Book Reviews

### **Fundamentals of the physical environment, 4th edition**

Peter Smithson, Ken Addison and Ken Atkinson. Routledge, New York, 2008. 792 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-39516-8.

First published in 1985 as the *Fundamentals of Physical Geography*, this classic textbook has developed a deserved reputation as an accessible, comprehensive and well-written introduction for undergraduate students in physical geography.

During the last 25 years, physical geography has undergone significant changes with an increased emphasis on numerical modelling, computer and laboratory analysis, environmental history and proxy records. Textbooks, such as the *Fundamentals of the Physical Environment*, have evolved to address these trends. The book changed its name to correspond with a second and third edition in 1997 and 2002. In this fourth edition, published in 2008, all chapters have been revised, new chapters added, and, for the first time, the book is presented in full colour.

Providing accessible and broad coverage of all aspects of physical geography, the book is well structured and divided into five logical 'parts': 'Fundamentals', 'Atmosphere', 'Geosphere', 'Biosphere' and 'Environments'. The authors retain a systems approach and appear keen to emphasise this perspective in their renaming of several chapters. For example, Chapter 14, 'Flowing water at the land surface', has been renamed 'Fluvial systems', and Chapter 16, 'The work of the wind', has become 'Aeolian systems'.

Chapter 1, 'The physical environment: scientific concepts and methods', contains a new extended section on the paradigm shifts which have led to the development of physical geography as a modern academic

discipline. 'Four giants of modern physical geography' – Chorley, Houghton, Hare and Prance – and their respective disciplinary contributions are identified. The chapter concludes by acknowledging that Earth System Science is likely to be the next enduring paradigm shift.

A new chapter (23), 'Environmental reconstruction: principles and practice', examines the reconstruction of past environments using information preserved in the present. The principle of uniformity, summarised as 'the present is the key to the past,' provides a basis for discussion of different types of environmental signatures and of the documentary evidence that provides proxy records. The authors extend this principle, recognising the importance of past events in aiding future environmental management decisions.

Somewhat unusually, previous editions of this book ended without a concluding chapter. In this edition, a new chapter (28), 'Current and future environmental change', provides the authors with an opportunity to discuss the complexities associated with climate change and the likely impacts of global warming. They allude to the important role that physical geographers can play in predicting, communicating, and managing environmental change.

While these new additions add significantly to the value of this edition, they also reflect the rate of development within physical geography and in our scientific understanding of environmental change. To make space for these changes, the former Chapters 20, 21, 24 and 25 have been synthesised as Chapters 20, 'Principles of biogeography' and 24, 'Polar and alpine environments'.

New, one page outlines, preceding each designated 'part' of the book, explain the content of each section and where they sit within the broader context of the subject. As in previous

editions, each chapter ends with a concise summarisation of key points, and further readings and web resources are provided for those wanting detail beyond a general text. All this reference material has been modified and updated since the previous edition.

Examples are used extensively to support the text. Overall these provide good global coverage, although, unsurprisingly a strong UK flavour does persist. Key events that occurred since the last edition (2002) have been included (e.g. Hurricane Katrina, 2005). With over 450 diagrams and 150 photographs, the arrival of full colour strengthens the appeal of this edition. The diagrams and maps are clear and detailed, and, in places, new photographs replace those of the third edition.

One notable change in this new edition is that all the key words and concepts have been highlighted within the text. This feature, common in other textbooks, typically links these words to a glossary of terms. Despite an updated and comprehensive glossary, frustratingly, not all the highlighted words or concepts are included.

A basic but functional companion website (<http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415395168>) provides instructors and students with bullet-point chapter summaries, potential discussion and essay questions, and a selection of downloadable diagrams from the text. Extra readings, further web links and extended case studies are also included. Unlike some of the more interactive offerings from similar texts, this website is static, but the content is sound.

The authors reflect not only the changing nature of the discipline, but also echo the kind of advice an instructor might reasonably give a student when they state that, 'the ability to understand and explain, rather than merely describe . . . , is central to the relevance of modern geography' (p. 21). To this extent, this new, revised edition of the *Fundamentals of the Physical Environment* deserves to retain the position of its predecessors on the recommended reading list of undergraduate courses in physical geography.

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### **Nature unbound. Conservation, capitalism and the future of protected areas**

D. Brockington, R. Duffy and J. Igoe.  
Earthscan, London, 2008. 249 pp.  
ISBN 978-1-844-074402.

Conservation is often represented in relatively unproblematic, progressive terms. The authors of this book immediately disrupt such comfortable assumptions by asking why the most dramatic growth in extent of protected natural areas worldwide was between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s, when neoliberal economic policies were in their ascendancy. Their script is 'to recognise that capitalist policies and values, and often neoliberal policies and values, pervade conservation practice; indeed in some parts of the world they infest it' (p. 3).

Their central concern is therefore to explore how the benefits and costs of conservation activities are distributed. Their approach is that of social scientists seeking to bring a more critically informed style of analysis to conservation debates. Impressively, they are not limited to any particular country or region, but draw on extensive worldwide experience. Although they are strongest on sub-Saharan Africa, they range widely across what is occurring in Australasia, Southeast Asia, Europe and the Americas. New Zealand issues are often highlighted, but make a different sort of sense when read in this relational context rather than within the national frame that almost always circumscribes discussions here.

The second chapter provides an overview of these histories, drawing out some surprising regional differences, as well as 'the tremendous variety in places enjoying some form of state protection' (p. 38). Chapter 3 explores the imperatives for conservation in the forms of protecting wilderness from human encroachment, and to preserve biodiversity and species. Commodification for consumption is left until later chapters. The 'power of parks' is the subject of the fourth chapter, asking two questions: do they work better than other arrangements and what is their effect on people? It is only later, in the fifth chapter about non-park forms of managing resources, that parks themselves are described as 'fortress conservation

arrangements' (p. 88), a term that deserves more comment. Yet the argument in these chapters is strong precisely because it is not presented as black and white. The difficulty of conceptualising and measuring costs and benefits is always stressed.

Many New Zealand readers will be fascinated by themes in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. These cover topics such as co-management, conservation and indigenous peoples and, evocatively, 'The spread of tourist habitat'. The chapter on 'Local management of natural resources' gives many examples that stand in contrast to the neat division between land managed for conservation and land managed for production that prevails in New Zealand. The authors argue for 'a more nuanced and contextual approach... for doing conservation with indigenous communities' (p. 128). At the same time, they continually seek to disaggregate the woolly concept of 'community' in their quest to emphasise that whenever some peoples win, it is likely that others lose.

The chapters that argue the central thesis most strongly are left until last. Chapter 8 is about international conservation, and charts the rapid growth in recent decades in both numbers and influence of conservation NGOs. Yet tracking their spending is hard and studies of their effectiveness few. They are described as 'a potential threat to community-based approaches to conservation' (p. 164), when for donor organisations, saving species often leads back to the appeal of a people-free wilderness. The final chapter attempts to theorise the suggestive link between contemporary conservation practices and neoliberalism that has informed the whole book. It constructs two models, centred on the 'black box of productive nature' and today's 'green box of consumptive nature', in which 'both function to conceal the ecological connections of people's daily consumptive practices' (p. 190). Conservation is therefore challenged to find ways to help people grasp the ecological implications of these practices, while at the same time being one of the main reasons that these implications are obscured through its commodification of nature.

In short, this is an exciting book that summarises the debates about conservation with clarity and depth, but takes them several stages

further to confront the reader to recognise the many ways in which conservation practices shape and are shaped by contemporary capitalism. It deserves to be read in New Zealand, where conservation, like anywhere else, is anything but unproblematic. It is, however, frequently constructed as such: to the extent that we seem often to lack the analytical tools to engage in proper debate. In contrast, this book provides plenty.

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### The amazing world of James Hector

Simon Nathan and Mary Varnham (eds). Awa Press, Wellington, 2008. 185 pp. ISBN 978-0-9582750-7-1.

Few individuals in history have been as deserving of the epithet of 'Mr Science' as James Hector was in colonial New Zealand. As the chapters in this small volume ably demonstrate, his responsibilities went far beyond his well-known leadership of the New Zealand Geological Survey and editorship of the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, and extended into roles such as superintending New Zealand's contribution to international exhibitions, helping to set the direction of its tertiary education and even acting as the nation's official timekeeper. As pivotal to scientific research and administration as Hector was, his work has, however, largely eluded scholarly attention until recent times. The publication of this series of papers from the James Hector centenary symposium held at Te Papa in 2007 therefore represents an important step in filling this considerable void.

For the student of nineteenth-century New Zealand, all of the chapters are revealing, although geographical themes feature more strongly in some than others. Hector's geological explorations in western Canada (1857–1860) and Otago (1862–1865) are ably summarised by Peter Hector and Tony Hocken, respectively, while George Gibbs explains how Hector's observations make him one of New Zealand's pioneering biogeographers.

The chapters on the Wellington Botanic Gardens by Winsome Shepherd and Walter Cook, and the Ratanui homestead by John Adam and Louise Beaumont, also provide an interesting counterpoint, as they trace Hector's endeavours to modify the environment through landscape change and biotic introductions at both the macro and micro scales.

Indeed, the clever synergy throughout the book between the story of Hector the public scientist and administrator, and that of Hector the private individual, is one of its key merits. Some chapters have a greater focus on organisational development, such as Francis Lucian Reid's on the New Zealand Institute, Ian Speden's on the New Zealand Geological Survey, and Jock Phillips' on the New Zealand Meteorological Service, but each offers insights into Hector's role as a nodal individual in national and sometimes international scientific networks. Lastly, the public representation of New Zealand society, both domestically and internationally, is a theme of Conal McCarthy's chapter, which although principally on the Colonial Museum, also includes details of New Zealand's presence at foreign exhibitions.

Inevitably, in a work based on a series of papers, there will be areas covered in greater depth than others. How the leading science figures outside Wellington got on with Hector is one topic which might fruitfully have been expanded upon. For example, Ewan Fordyce alludes to Hector's role in trying to pacify the Moa-bone Point Cave controversy, but the controversy itself is never expressly mentioned. Equally, more might have been said on Hector's views of the colonising project. One would suspect Hector had some appreciation of the value of Māori culture and society, given his adaptation of Māori words when giving names to New Zealand fossil species, but the Māori world features to any extent only in the discussion of the management of artefacts that the Colonial Museum collected. It is also a pity that the pioneer weather recording efforts of individuals such as Henry Torlesse have been overlooked, and that the Colonial Laboratory receives little attention, although it is pleasing to see that its soil-testing efforts do get some recognition. However, the overwhelming feeling upon reading a chapter is not frustration, but a wish to know more, which is prob-

ably no bad thing. As a whole, the chapters have been crafted into a coherent story, for which the editors deserve to be congratulated.

In terms of the accoutrements to the text, it would be fair to say that the work is richly illustrated, much more so than one would normally expect. The use of so many archival images throughout is a testament to the thought and effort that has gone into their selection. While the addition of an index is helpful, the bibliography is somewhat wanting though. The references supplied for each chapter do not include manuscript sources, and at least a select list of Hector's publications should have been provided, given that the appendices do contain a list of species named for and by Hector.

Overall, *The Amazing World of James Hector* has much to offer anyone interested in the development of natural sciences in New Zealand, or globally, for that matter, during the nineteenth century. Given its quality, and its very modest price (RRP NZ\$25), it is deserving of a large readership.

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### **In dwelling: Implacability, exclusion and acceptance**

Peter King. Ashgate, Aldershot, 2008. 149 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-48703.

Peter King has once again presented a stimulating discussion that provides direction for the field of housing studies. There is no doubting King's commitment to the expansion of this field or his knowledge of the subject. This book philosophically probes relations between individuals, their housing and home, ultimately re-imagining peoples' acts of place making and their dwelling. King achieves this by privileging personal experience and autobiography while exploring cinematic film and traversing a range of theoretical perspectives. Questions regarding the role that intimate personal experience and perceptions may play in shaping the way we each use, shape and are influenced by housing are pertinent to the continued devel-

opment of housing studies and are in focus here. The subjective dimensions of housing and personal meanings are emphasised by King in such a way that the reader is prompted to scrutinise her/his own particular experiences and meanings. This investigation and personal exploration is both valuable and productive in extending thinking pertaining to the relationship between people and their dwelling.

King introduces his discussion with a critique of housing studies in which he argues against approaches that only superficially examine connections between people, their houses, and personal experience and meaning. King promulgates the idea that investigations of housing must focus on the personal and employ social science theories to do so. This discussion is followed by the assertion that a theoretical emphasis on personal experience and meaning grounded in the social sciences is vital, since this viewpoint demonstrates how we each relate and respond to housing to produce our own individual houses as *mine*. This argument could usefully be applied to understanding a wide range of individual place experiences, practices and attachments. Central to King's argument is the idea of the dwelling as *implacable*. King employs this term to articulate the notion that the way we access and use housing determines whether it works for or against us. Our dwelling, King continues, can have positive or negative impacts on our lives.

What King does well in this discussion is to position subjective and personal meanings as of paramount importance, and to call to question people's deeper relationships with their dwelling. Questions regarding how and why people may thrive or weaken in line with their intimate experiences of living at home are raised by the arguments King develops, making this book a thoughtful and valuable addition to King's work to date. However, while thought provoking, overall, King's discussion is unconvincing due to its overly individualistic emphasis and obvious biases. King is ultimately speaking from his own experience and therefore his own position in time and place that is not generalisable to others. His concept of dwelling as *mine*, for example, does not allow room for dwelling to be considered in any alternative or pluralistic sense, as may be more applicable in social and cultural set-

tings outside of King's own experience. King has, of course, been criticised for generalising from his own experience in earlier publications, and his tendency to do so here ultimately undermines his call to examine housing from a subjective and personal perspective by assuming a set of universal truths.

Also concerning is King's reliance on film criticism as a method of investigation. King does make a strong argument that to investigate the subjective and the personal researchers may usefully turn to methods that are instinctive and focused on meaning-making. However, because King persistently generalises from his own experience and draws conclusions by focusing on particular films, his claims are undermined. The method employed actually works to de-personalise the illustrations drawn regarding relations between people and their dwelling, since these illustrations are so one-sided and unique to King himself and his position in time and place.

Despite these shortcomings, this book offers a range of compelling ideas based on a diverse range of theories, sometimes used in unexpected ways. King's arguments will provoke the reader to consider the issues even whilst they may not agree with King's assumption of a shared vision of what is commonplace and common experience.

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### **Non-representational theory. Space politics affect**

Nigel Thrift. Routledge, London, 2008. 325 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-393218.

As with *Spatial Formations* (1996) and *Knowing Capitalism* (2005), *Non-Representational Theory* is a compilation of Nigel Thrift's recent work. Each of the 10 chapters – eight previously published and two newly written – is concerned to articulate a non-representational style of thought. This has been Thrift's intellectual project for over a decade now. At its heart is a commitment to move beyond styles of analysis that privilege *what*

*humans think* and to give more attention to *generative interactions between diverse entities*.

To elaborate briefly, non-representational theory contends that what humans think is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of what is going on. For a start, human attention is highly selective: only a portion of ambient stimuli are ever noticed. In addition, as Thrift explains, only the smallest part of human cognition is explicitly conscious (perhaps as little as 5%). The rest occurs at pre-, sub- and unconscious levels, as part of complex forms of processing that are distributed across the body as much as centred within the brain. If we ask people to account for the actions of themselves or others, we should not therefore be surprised when highly attenuated narratives emerge, in which intention, motives and rationality are to some extent inserted retrospectively. For analytical purposes, the constructivist emphasis on human representations of the world, whether linguistic or visual, can thus only take us so far. To the extent that such approaches remain common in certain quarters of contemporary human geography, Thrift unsurprisingly distances himself from them.

A further impetus for non-representational theory is the recognition that places are comprised of diverse entities that are constantly interacting, forming and reforming alliances. Instead of geographies in which humans routinely take centre stage, we need analyses that take seriously the activities and capacities of these assorted others, whether animate or inanimate, and the interactions between them. Such arguments are, of course, integral to actor-network theory, which Thrift acknowledges as an important influence, and form an important strand within his broadly post-humanist perspective.

In the first chapter of the volume, 'Life, but not as we know it', Thrift elaborates upon these and other tenets of non-representational theory, addressing potential objections, as well as methodological implications. Following this introduction, the collection then has three parts. The chapters in Part I each develop a non-representational approach to a particular theoretical-cum-empirical domain. In 'Re-inventing invention: new tendencies in capitalist commodification', the focus is contemporary

business and its relentless quest for extracting value. 'Still life in nearly present time' then considers nature as a 'key site of contemplation and mysticism in the modern world' (p. 56), touching on issues of spirituality, embodiment and stillness in the so-called fast societies. The third and fourth chapters cover driving in the city and movement space, respectively. Throughout these discussions, Thrift seeks to convey rather than dampen the liveliness of the world. The pace of exposition is sometimes breathless, but the style is such that one often gets a *feel* for what is being advocated, even when a slower or fuller treatment may have been welcome.

Part II consists of a single chapter, 'After-words', which begins by asking how we might best value and speak about the richness of a human life. This piece acts a pivot for the volume, and leads into the more directly political terrain of Part III. The four chapters here are concerned with the interplay between action, affect and everyday hopefulness, rather than mainstream politics in the sense of electoral contests and democratic representation. We read about the flow of positive and negative feelings within cities, the marshalling of emotion through advertising and rhetoric, and the need for new forms of counter-public as alternatives to the traditional left and right. As in the rest of the volume, a diverse range of authors is enrolled in support of the arguments developed. A recurring theme, however, is Thrift's desire to facilitate '... an affirmative micropolitics of productivity which attempts to inject more kindness and compassion into everyday interaction' (p. 215).

As the work of a leading human geographer, *Non-Representational Theory* is a stimulating and challenging collection. The terrain covered is extensive, and the arguments spark off all sorts of questions and possibilities. For geographers interested in social theory, the volume is likely to repay a number of readings. For those wanting an overview of non-representational theory, the first chapter provides a valuable overview and would be good reading group material, while the last offers a useful perspective on the relationship between affect and emotion. The chapters on contemporary capitalism, nature/embodiment, urban mobility and emergent forms of political practice will also

be of interest to those researching in these specific areas.

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**Space, difference, everyday life:  
 Reading Henri Lefebvre**

Kanishka Goonewardena, Stefan Kipfer, Richard Milgrom and Christian Schmid (eds). Routledge, New York. 2008. 329 pp. ISBN 0-415-95460-6.

During his long writing career, the French thinker, Henri Lefebvre [1901–1991], managed to upset many of those who surrounded him by shaking up and challenging assumptions they held as self evident. His academic engagements included his early critiques of European fascism, his tumultuous involvement and final break with the French communist party, his ongoing conflict with established academic institutions, and his emblematic role in the student and worker revolts in Paris in 1968. He resolutely held to the view that the process of forming ideas should not be isolated into academic institutions, but should emerge in dialogue with the stark realities and social movements that mark a particular time and place. True to the spirit of Lefebvre, this edited book presents 17 thoughtful and passionately written chapters that reflect Lefebvre's disdain for staid and doctrinaire thinking and bring his central ideas forward into a modern world preoccupied with urban environments, globalisation, lived aesthetics, and reinterpreted citizenship.

While the focus is primarily on applications of Lefebvre's thinking within the disciplines of social geography and urban planning, the chapters also link discussion to developments in critical theory within the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, art criticism, political studies and global theory. This multidisciplinary focus reflects the breadth and depth of Lefebvre's own academic pursuits. The novice reader of social theory may find the complexity of reference to these different theoretical traditions challenging. In many places, the discussion

assumes some familiarity with contemporary thinkers of the time, such as Debord, Gramsci, Heidegger, Axelos and Breton. Nonetheless, if the reader is prepared to suspend this unfamiliarity, the chapters still provide an engaging introduction to the relevance of Lefebvre's ideas to modern concerns.

Individual chapters focus on ways in which one or two of Lefebvre's key concepts shed light on or can be applied to current social issues. In Chapter 4, Lukasz Stanek provides a stimulating analysis of how Lefebvre's concept of a 'concrete abstract' assists in understanding the structuring of space. Several chapters explore Lefebvre's concept of 'totality' in understanding the subjectivities of space (Chapters 2 and 7) and the dynamics of colonisation and hegemony (Chapter 13). Other chapters explore his concept of 'everyday life' and how it relates to engagement with art and design (Chapters 10, 11 and 16). Another set of chapters focus on his later writings on global and urban citizenship, where concepts such as 'difference', 'centrality' and 'peripheralisation' help in understanding the ever-changing nature of modern urban environments (Chapters 14 and 15). One aspect of Lefebvre's writing that the book is light on is the influence of Marx and his interpretation of dialectics. However, given that the focus is on urban environments, this omission is understandable. At either end of the book, the book's editors have provided succinctly written and lively introductory and concluding chapters that manage to contextualise the diversity of chapter offerings.

The general orientation of most chapters involves by-and-large an enthusiastically positive take on Lefebvre's ideas, but this is not adopted uncritically. For example, in Chapter 6, Geoffrey Waite accuses Lefebvre of being 'a sometimes avid and always mediocre and careless reader of Heidegger', who appropriates his thinking into a form of 'Left-Heideggerianism' that is part of 'a strangulating weed system that is anti-communist and anti-thinking' (p. 95). These comments further illustrate the forthright and enthusiastic style that characterises the writing throughout the book.

Perhaps as a consequence of Lefebvre's willingness to challenge intellectual orthodoxies, his ideas attained less recognition than those of other contemporary thinkers. This book

re-evaluates his contribution. It identifies how over the course of his many original works, Lefebvre's thinking evolved gradually into a coherent set of ideas grounded in his key concepts of 'space', 'difference' and 'everyday life'. It illustrates how, when these ideas are applied to modern contexts, they provide a surprising wide range of insights into the ways people organise and derive meaning from the spaces they inhabit.

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### **The British Columbia atlas of wellness, 1st edition**

Leslie T. Foster and C. Peter Keller. Western Geographical Press, Canada, 2007. 233 pp. ISBN 978-0-919838-32-1.

The ever-increasing availability of geographically referenced data in this digital age has enabled the publication of several atlases portraying the geography of health and society in general. A common trait of the atlases is to highlight the spatial distribution of disease and, in many cases, centre on the extent of inequality between the areas with the best and worst rates of disease. While informative and accessible for the lay reader, these maps may unintentionally generate stigma for the individuals living in those worse-off neighbourhoods. It was therefore a welcome surprise to see that the authors of the *British Columbia Atlas of Wellness* explicitly focus on the positive aspects of health: 'The vast majority . . . [of] mapping exercises to date have tended to focus on the negative rather than accentuate the positive' (p. 6).

The purpose of this atlas is to communicate data about key wellness indicators for BC, and to highlight patterns that emerge in an interesting and informative way. The Atlas also supplements the ActNow BC initiative, a comprehensive health promotion program that was established in 2005 to encourage residents of British Columbia to enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle. Following the introductory chapter outlining the purpose and goals of the Atlas

mentioned above, Chapter 2 discusses 'wellness' in detail. As we'd expect from a Canadian publication, the authors have adopted a holistic perspective of wellness, containing physical, emotional, social, intellectual, occupational, spiritual and environmental elements. The measurement of wellness is discussed before delving into the determinants of wellness. Although written for a lay audience, this chapter would also be useful reading for any undergraduate course that discusses the determinants of health and/or wellness. Data sources and map interpretation are the focus of Chapter 3 before the physical and human geography of British Columbia is provided in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 is the engine room of the atlas, with seven sections presenting over 270 maps related to the geography of more than 120 different dimensions of wellness, such as the determinants of health, smoking behaviours, nutrition and food security, physical activity, healthy weight, healthy pregnancy, and 'wellness outcomes'. The wellness outcomes section centres on matters such as self-reported health and mental health, the absence of long-term illnesses, being injury free for 12 months or more and life expectancy at birth.

In the concluding chapter, the authors use a simplistic measure to create wellness 'benchmarks' for the province using data from the 2005 Canadian community health survey, for the 16 health delivery service areas (HSDAs). This is an attempt to summarise data portrayed in Chapter 5. Data representing a particular wellness domain are pooled, and those HSDAs that are significantly higher than the regional average are scored with a '+'; conversely, those HSDAs that were significantly lower than the region were assigned a '-'. The index is simply the sum of + or -, for each wellness domain. While this approach to benchmarking is relatively crude, it is nonetheless effective, and the authors are to be commended for attempting to synthesise so eloquently the data they have presented in the Atlas.

Each topic introduces the reader to the data source and how wellness was measured, before describing the key points in the map, and how these findings relate to the wider literature. A five-class map scale is used, with a green-beige-orange colour ramp, clearly emphasising the variations in the map. Regions that are

statistically significantly different to British Columbia are identified using a simple hatching technique. In addition to the obligatory five-colour legend accompanying the map, an 'extended' legend is provided in a table, outlining the rates for each region depicted in the map. My only criticism of the atlas was that the authors adopted a three-scale colour ramp to portray their wellness indexes in Chapter 6. Retaining the five-class scale used in the previous chapter would have more clearly demonstrated the gradients of wellness that were apparent in the tables accompanying the maps.

This book was packed full of information and should set the benchmark for future social atlases. In addition, the authors are maintaining a companion website, which includes updated maps and further information. With so many comparable data sources and geographical scales used here in New Zealand, I hope that an atlas of wellness for New Zealand hits our shelves soon!

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