12 Conclusion

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Introduction

This book, *Neolocalism and Tourism: Understanding a Global Movement*, has attempted to broaden discussion around the current neolocalism movement and its role in tourism development. The term 'neolocal' was coined by Shortridge in 1996, although its vernacular use in tourism studies has remained obscure. Its connections with sense of place, place-attachment, community or regional identity, and storytelling have allowed authors to investigate many of the aspects of neolocalism without using the specific terminology. We can credit Schnell and Reese (2003) with revitalising the concept, which has resulted in its growing use within the tourism literature. Therefore, this comprehensive collection of work expands the theoretical understanding of neolocalism and applies it to a variety of innovative tourism development projects. As stated in our introduction, our goal has been to encourage scholars to 'don a critical lens' and 'explore this book and the case studies within via a vantagepoint of both proposed solutions and evolving contentions' (Cavaliere & Ingram, Chapter 1). While recognising that many of our authors did not conduct research with neolocalism in mind, the case studies presented here have shown the versatility of neolocalism. We have attempted to bring attention to its strengths in understanding tourism development and marketing, as well as many of the social challenges inherent in these activities. Moreover, we hope that our readers recognise neolocalism as a 'tool in the sustainability tool box' (Slocum & Ingram, Chapter 2) rather than as a standalone alternative view of tourism phenomena.

The conclusion is designed to recap the inherent messages throughout the book. By highlighting common themes, the goal is to provide a holistic understanding of neolocalism as presented by our authors. If we

recognise neolocalism as 'a way to strengthen insight and communication about, and benefits from, local cultural uniqueness' (Cavaliere et al., Chapter 8) and 'that (which) differentiates the destination and promotes a connected consciousness of the locality' (Leite & Allis, Chapter 7), we inherently understand that neolocalism and its application is as diverse as each community, destination, culture, or place. 'Human bodies are not simply vessels of consciousness' (Carolan, 2009: 1-2) but our embodiment and our senses are critical avenues to multiple transformative ways of knowing, as evidenced throughout the chapters of this book.

Moreover, it is important to recognise the inherent difference between localism and neolocalism. Neolocalism involves the intentionality of using localism, in this case through tourism development and promotion (Shortridge, 1996). Booth-Smith (2017) claims that empathy is absent from localism, as it turns our vision inward without an understanding of the inherent connections each locality has with the rest of the world. Quirk (2017: 9-10) writes,

> We are all tethered to the fabric of locality. This tethering can tie us down through attachments that limit our horizons or our scope for action. For the limit of localism is parochialism. But when properly attached to the fabric of locality we can also develop our capabilities and our confidence to craft new and productive attachments to other places nearby or across the globe (p. 9).

These authors see neolocalism as the freedom to engage with the local as a means to communicate sense of place to a global audience and to embrace the interconnectivity of all localities in shaping human understanding, interactions, and diplomacy. Therefore, neolocalism widens a locality by placing it within global society. In attempting to further our understanding of neolocalism, it is important to craft a definition that embraces these ideologies, to separate neolocalism from localism, and allow for its changing representation as a theory as its use evolves.

Lessons learned

There are a number of themes revealed throughout these chapters. These include: definition versus redefinition of sense of place; heterogeneity of cultural representation; facilitators as actors in the development of neolocalism; community capital inherent in neolocal facilitation; and the consumption of neolocalism. Each of these will be further explained and aspects for future research are provided.

Definition versus redefinition of sense of place

Sense of place is an obvious cornerstone of neolocalism (Holtkamp et al., 2016) and the fundamental construct in the understanding and application of the neolocal framework (Fagence, Chapter 4). Schnell (2013) describes neolocalism as 'a new narrative of place'. Peng et al. (Chapter 9) highlight 'place-identity formation', whereas Derrett (Chapter 6) describes the 'attempt to reinvigorate the local' and Slocum (Chapter 11) offers 'renewed sense of place'. Whether used as a strategy for creation or revitalisation, neolocalism is 'a complex phenomenon with interconnected components grounded in a multi-disciplinary array of theories and concepts' (Ingram, Chapter 3).

Neolocalism requires the intentional construction of inherent value related to locality, which makes it a useful tool for both the construction of identity and the reassessment of locality. It defines authenticity as communities negotiate their identity through change and evolve over time (Richards, 2009). Most importantly, neolocalism allows for place consciousness to be integrated more fully into both the strategic planning and marketing of a destination. For example, Fagence (Chapter 4) uses 'nodes of geographical meaning' to explain different historical narratives surrounding Ned Kelly, the bushranger-cum-outlaw, that have merged into a regional theme where 'sense of place, place-attachment, place-identity, and place-personality may migrate as the telling of the story unfolds'. Aquino and Kloes (Chapter 5) also showcase the evolution of a theme, here the Icelandic sagas, that form the backbone of tourism development. These examples show both the natural evolution of sense of place, as individual towns take stock in their assets related to Ned Kelly and add their individual contributions to the overall tourism product, as well as the purposeful construction of place narrative, where a number of Icelandic communities sought out and developed a place-based brand. These two destinations appear to be rather isolated from other traditional, perhaps mass, forms of tourism requiring a strategic assessment of tourism assets through which sense of place is developed and communicated (Lockie, 2001).

It is the intentionality of neolocalism that makes it malleable and varied across destinations. Unlike other forms of tourism development, local knowledge must form the foundation on which sense of place resides (Lichrou et al., 2008). In turn, sense of place informs the types of tourism developed and the narratives which communicate and engage the