

Bridging **place & policy** in divisive times



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Hello!

I'm **Ashleigh Weeden**

I've been wrestling with how to bridge place and policy in ways that feel meaningful and responsible during what feels like increasingly polarized times. I have a lot of questions and I hope we can untangle some tricky issues together.

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geography of **discontent**

- Brexit, 'Wexit', Build the Wall... these are the symptoms coming to the surface
- Are some places (especially rural places) being left behind or actively excluded... or neither?
- Who gets to 'belong'? Who decides?
- Despite all this... we seem to think we have enough in common that we can bridge these fault lines...

Does “place” give us a window
into addressing division?
Or do we risk deepening the
divide?



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What do we mean by place?

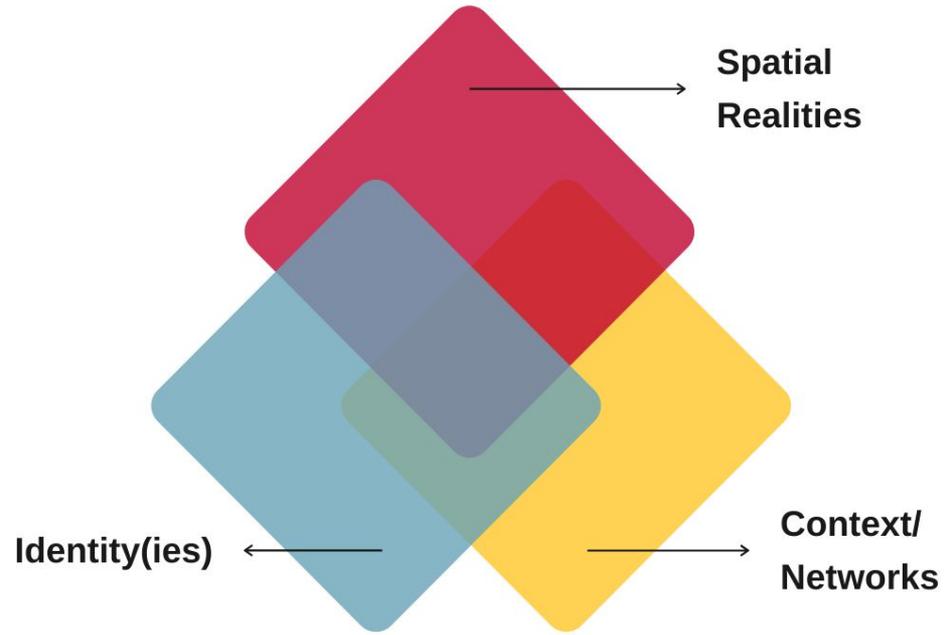
Let's go back to 1991...

Place is somewhere in particular.

Places have multiple identities.

**Places are dynamic processes -
not frozen in time.**

**Places are not containers or flat
surfaces - they are alive and
composed of layers of stories
written through time and space.**





place is somewhere in particular

... but it depends who you ask....

... and when you ask them...

... and what you do with what you hear...



... bridging place and policy...

place

- spatial, relational, connected
- full of stories, conflict, complexity
- specific, nuanced

policy

- often geared towards what's missing
- intended to smooth complexity
- necessarily generalized

what gets lost in translation?



power, processes, place, and policy...

- ◉ Decisions required about the appropriate scale for decision-making - policy-by-policy
- ◉ Cohesion beyond borders: progressive sense of place, globally connected localities
- ◉ Building on assets - moving from 'fragility' to 'green shoots'
- ◉ Connecting policy to lived-experience - and trusting places to know what's right for their futures (... and learning how to address maladaptive responses through capacity enabling processes...)
- ◉ Process, process, process



Now what?

Let's **talk about it!**

You can find me at

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Worth a read...

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