

Finally, the authors have made a concerted effort to identify and engage the work of feminist ethnographers in other disciplines and interdisciplinary fields. And, while acknowledging that they are limited to English-language work, they do make an effort to integrate international scholars (including Canadians and northern Europeans). The text could easily and productively be used in Canadian classrooms, with additional ethnographic readings assigned to address Canadian issues and contexts, notably the experiences of Indigenous, immigrant and refugee women, rural women and women living in poverty. Leslie Robertson and Dara Culhane's *In Plain Sight: Reflections on Life in Downtown Eastside Vancouver* (Talonbooks 2005) comes immediately to mind as a complementary text.

Denielle Elliott and Dara Culhane, eds., *A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017, 147 pages.

*Reviewer: Shelley Butler
McGill University*

A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies is a wide-ranging book that honours and experiments with anthropology's foundational practice of fieldwork and representation. Chapters on imagining, writing, sensing, recording and editing, walking, and performing offer creative visions for ethnography, which is conceptualised as a research process and product, such as a text or film. The presumed audience is researchers and teachers, as well as students embarking on research. Integrating theory and practice, each contributor includes exercises to try out. In a volume that valorises embodied and imaginative ways of knowing, it is fitting that we, the readers, are invited to experiment too. This volume is academic and activist – it aims to mobilise and inspire emerging and experienced researchers to know and evoke the world in new ways.

The editors, Denielle Elliott and Dara Culhane, are founders and “co-curators” of the research collective Centre for Imaginative Ethnography, as are the other contributors. Their fieldwork spans Canada, Cuba, Ireland, Italy, Kenya and Poland. While their projects are varied, they share creative practices grounded in an appreciation of honest, ethical and reflexive engagement with others, whether this be in the field, in classrooms or in daily life. Subversively, this book valorises classrooms as sites of knowledge co-production; such a claim disrupts standard hierarchies of the academy. It is uncanny how timely this volume's call is for ethical and creative engagement. For instance, its argument that lived and embodied experience must count as knowledge could not be more pertinent considering the crises of “unfounded” sexual harassment cases in police departments across Canada. *A Different Kind of Ethnography* proposes the arts as a toolbox for a more humanist, politically engaged anthropology.

In her chapter “Writing,” Denielle Elliott argues that ethnographic writing has more “effect and affect” (24) when it is imag-

inative, poetic, personal and even fictional. She explores how “mischievous writing” (32) – like tweeting and Instagram posting and other emerging forms of communication – are valuable experiments. Writing exercises such as creating an Instagram or a haiku to evoke a research setting or problem combine creativity with constraints in productive ways. Challenges of “speaking for others” and “giving voice” are hallmarks of anthropology and part of our contemporary cultural zeitgeist, yet they are discussed rather briefly.

Dara Culhane's chapter “Sensing” introduces sensory ethnography as an alternative to anthropology's focus on writing and speaking, arguing that “we come to know ourselves and each other through multiple avenues, including cultural traditions, political/economic relations, familiarly and individual biographies, and sensory experience and communication” (46). She translates this theoretical statement into practice by proposing exercises that require that we pay attention to our ways of sensing the world. Her commentary on sensory dimensions of colonialism and resistance (such as in Kwakwaka'wakw underground potlach dancing) are excellent examples of how power and politics pervade sensory experience. This argument preempts reactionary claims that sensory anthropology is too touchy-feely.

In “Recording and Editing,” Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier pushes back against popular complaints that our lives are too saturated in media. She shows how good practices with audiovisual technologies can “stimulate spatial awareness” (82) as well as other senses such as memory. Like her co-contributors, she provides exercises for practising listening and evoking spaces through sound. Particularly useful is her nuanced discussion of the range of sonic approaches to ethnography – for example, “purist sonic approaches” (78) versus montage strategies that seek to evoke complexity through fragments and disorientation. Recording and editing require aesthetic and epistemological decisions that demand self-awareness.

Christina Moretti takes us “walking” as she reflects on her fieldwork in Italy. She situates her chapter in relation to investigations about public space, a field that is especially strong in urban anthropology. Who uses, inhabits and claims public space? Can public space foster political, cultural and social engagement? Moretti is inspired by artistic interventions in public space, and she effectively demonstrates the value of following her subjects as a practice of co-imagining not only a route and place, but feelings that are attached to it. In a poignant anecdote, two migrant women who worked as nannies and caregivers show Moretti the art of the city to assert their aspirational sense of belonging.

In the final chapter on performing, Magdalena Kazubowski-Houston describes her creation of an “ethnographic fairy tale” as requested by her long-time interlocutor and collaborator, an elderly Polish Roma woman named Randia. The challenge becomes how to make the fairy-tale genre work as a story about transnational migration, aging, loneliness, blindness and resilience. Kazubowski-Houston demonstrates reflexivity and depth of research, a trademark of this volume, as she explores how to subvert the fairy tale to challenge her audience and honour her subjects. As she discusses her creative process, we are keenly aware (pace Fabian) that “no collaborative process is ever exempt from issues of power” (125).

A Different Kind of Ethnography is inspirational for emergent and seasoned scholars who want to experiment, collaborate

and make research meaningful in the academy and beyond. It is not only about writing culture, but also about making culture, differently.

Nick Sousanis, *Unflattening*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015, 198 pages.

*Reviewer: Stacy Leigh Pigg
Simon Fraser University*

First: read this book, slowly. Let your eyes pause, taking in the whole page at once. Change your focus to zoom into detail, and then pan outward again. Feel how your eyes want to wander across the page, and then feel the alternative visual paths also present. Hear a caption as you read it, also noticing the silences in the pauses marked by the spaces on the page. Then look at the caption as if it were not letters but a form. Allow your senses to project your body into the illusion of three-dimensional space conjured by the drawings. *Unflattening* is constructed as an experience. Its argument lies in its very form.

Unflattening asks how humans construct knowledge: How do fixed viewpoints limit us, flattening experience and perception? How do multiple vantage points open up new possibilities for imagination and insight? Constructed as an experiment in visual thinking, *Unflattening* uses graphic art to argue for greater appreciation of images – over words and text alone – in our understanding of what counts as knowledge. It is a philosophical meditation on thinking itself, on realism, abstraction and the imaginary, rendered through illustrations that play with motifs drawn from science, mathematics, map-making, philosophy, Greek mythology, and literature. The text in the caption boxes presents the authorial voice, a calm, elegant narration inviting the reader to

Look anew

Italo Calvino once wrote, “whenever humanity seems condemned to heaviness, I think I should fly like Perseus into a different space. I don’t mean escaping into dreams or the irrational. I mean that I have to change my approach, look at the world from a different perspective, with a different logic and with fresh methods of cognition and verification.”

A changed perspective is precisely the goal for the journey ahead: to discover new ways of seeing, to open spaces for possibilities, to find “fresh methods” from animating and awakening.

It is essential to note here that this need not be achieved only by such heroic efforts as winged sandals (or stallion).

Rather, it is, as Calvino noted, about finding different perspectives, and this begins by thinking about seeing ...

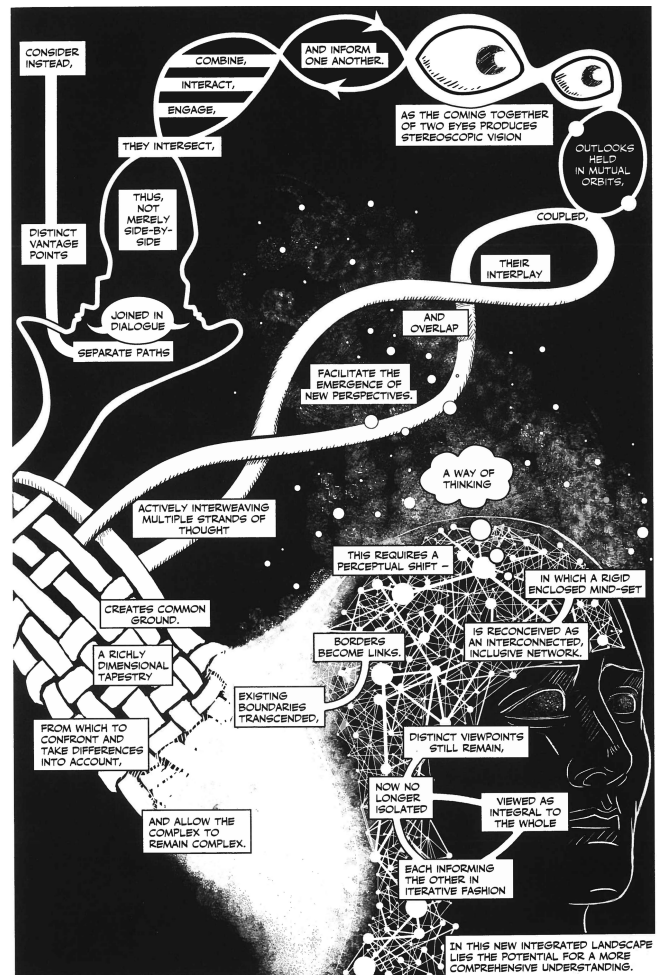


Figure 1: Nick Sousanis, *Unflattening* (2015, 37) (images courtesy of Harvard University Press)

These captions descend slowly from the upper-right corner to the lower left in the airy white space between the two elements of the illustration (spread on pages 26–27) depicting the figure of a man, seen from behind, soaring upward with winged sandals, lifting off from an orb whose surface consists entirely of a steep walled maze. Peering into this world as if from above, we see figures wandering inside this maze, robotically moving forward unable to notice the other walkers or to even know that their path is in fact a maze of dead ends. We can see what the trapped automatons cannot. We can also identify with the transcendence of an aerial perspective enabled by flight. In this spread, as in the composition of other pages in the book, the captions guide interpretation of the images, even as the drawings expand, deepen and complicate the words. The execution is beautiful, expressive, moving and thought-provoking. Widely and deservedly lauded as an innovative marriage of scholarly insight with comics art, *Unflattening* delivers on its promise to open up new insights.

Anthropologists, specifically, can find in this work food for thought beyond the main message intended by the author. An anthropologist could project onto Sousanis’ extended riff on