

Shelley Kotze

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Personal Statement

Since moving to Gothenburg in October 2017 I have been actively engaging myself in numerous networks and research groups which aligned with my own research interest – society and nature interactions. At the beginning of this year I started working within the Urban Rural Gothenburg project, and was appointed as a guest researcher at Mistra Urban Futures.

As a family we have been integrating ourselves, and our dogs, into Swedish society through long forest walks, swims in the lakes, trips on the trains and buses, and learning to cope with the snow and the dark... And now we are more settled in Gothenburg, with our young children happy in *förskola*, I am hoping to take this opportunity to further develop my own academic qualifications and career.

Education

MSc Geography (Cum Laude) University of South Africa: 2010-2013

Entitled '*The place of community values within community-based conservation: the case of Driftsands nature reserve*' my Master's dissertation fulfilled requirements for a full research degree. As such, as well as undertaking the degree as a full-time distance learning student, I completed the entire research project independently, from the formulation of the research proposal; gaining access to and buy-in from involved stakeholders; development of an appropriate research methodology; the carrying out of all autoethnographic and qualitative data collection and analysis; culminating in the final dissertation writing and publishing of the associated peer-reviewed article.

The dissertation was concerned with exploring the complexity of conducting community-based conservation initiatives within a governmentally-mandated organisation. The case-study site, Driftsands nature reserve, is situated on the Cape Flats, a densely populated urban area within the City of Cape Town and managed by CapeNature, as a nature reserve, as part of their mandate. However, given its urban location and the socio-economic status of populations living within and around the reserve boundaries there is a diversity of conflicts that arise as part of its management.

As part of the active autoethnographic participation and qualitative research methodology I was able to gain an understanding of the process of developing and running projects with a diversity of stakeholders, and their associated interests, from both community-based and organisational backgrounds.

Of greatest relevance to the research site were projects involved urban farming and then cultivation of both food produce and the harvesting of vegetation for use in traditional medicines; issues concerning cattle and sheep grazing; and environmental education with the aim of increasing knowledge about biodiversity and nature conservation, cultural associations; increasing social, physical and mental wellbeing; as well as job creation and skills development.

BA(Hons) Geography with Educational Studies (First Class) *University of Exeter, UK: 2006-2010*

From the more generalist core modules covering the philosophical underpinnings of geographical study, methodologies and analysis, I tailored my own module choices to cover biodiversity, plant ecology; conservation and; sustainable development, with the majority of modules covering my personal interest areas of identity and place; social inclusion and integration; and relations of power and trust.

The undergraduate degree culminated in a research dissertation which was conceptualised from start to finish by myself and sought to add to the discussion of scale and power relations in the social construction of nature, and how these are influenced by social and cultural identity and interactions. The research took place on South Africa's West Coast at a game reserve, the access to which was solely negotiated by myself and included the conducting of quantitative research surveys and autoethnographic participation.

Professional Experience

Urban Rural Gothenburg Research Forum (Business Region Gothenburg): Project Assistant

January 2018 – December 2019

I am currently employed as a project assistant for the Urban Gothenburg Research Forum. Within the position I have led my own research activities within the forum exploring the role of trust within integration projects in Gothenburg's North-East. One of the main duties has been as project secretary to an exciting new book which explores the practical experiences from the Urban Rural Gothenburg project. This has involved the scheduling of interviews with over 50 interviewees; coordinating the writing and edited processes; language consultation; licensing and; overall facilitation of ensuring the text is completed by the deadline.

Mistra Urban Futures: Guest Researcher - *January - December 2019*

As well as my position within the research forum I am also leading two projects within the Sweden-Kenya Interactive Learning Lab project (SKILLS). One project is entitled 'Exploring the role of gender within labour market integration through North-South collaboration.' The project is looking at the way in which women in the South are integrated into the labour market as a means of exploring how immigrant women can be more successfully integrated into the labour-market in Sweden. The project

explores stereotypes, cultural barriers and domestic situations that can cause the women to be challenged when seeking employment, and thus further integrating into Swedish society.

The second project is entitled 'Transboundary Research Collaborations for Poverty Alleviation.' It acts as an evaluation of both the SKILLS programme and Urban Rural Gothenburg project against 11 principles of transboundary research.

October 2017 – present

- **Nature-Society Relations within a Landscape Perspective Research Group:** I am currently a member of the Nature-Society Relations within a Landscape Perspective Research Group within the Department of Economy and Society at the University of Gothenburg.
- **Migration and Urban Development:** I have been participating within the Migration and Urban Development Platform at Mistra Urban Futures.
- **FORMAS funding application(s):** I have co-authored two FORMAS applications with colleagues from the Department of Economy and Society at the University of Gothenburg and Mistra Urban Futures entitled '*Access to urban green space as a way towards successful integration: Exploring perspectives of immigrant groups in Gothenburg*' and '*Urban green space for sustainable integration: A mixed-methodological approach to increasing access*'.

University of South Africa: eTutor and Teaching Assistant - January 2013 – December 2017

Whilst completing my Master's I became employed as an eTutor to modules regarding sustainability and environmental awareness within the faculty of geography at the University of South Africa, and subsequent to my graduation I was employed as a teaching assistant. The primary focus of the roles was to support 200 students per term through the module by facilitating their online learning; coaching for assessments and examinations; mentoring through the wider university environment; developing supporting educational materials and; marking of assessments.

Publications

Completed

Journal articles

- Kotze, S. (2018) The place of community-based values in conservation: the case of Driftsands Nature Reserve, Cape Town. *Bulletin of Geography: socioeconomic series*. (40) 101-122
- Dymitrow, M., Jordanova Peshevska, D., Biegańska, J. and Brauer, R. (2018): Wicked problems or wicked solutions? Sustainability—differently. [with contributions from Forsberg, M., Runsten, S., Ingelhart, K., Gustafsson, U. and Kotze, S.] *Urban Research (Mistra Urban Futures)*, 18 September 2018, Gothenburg, Sweden

- Dymitrow, M., Fermskog, K., Ingelhag, K. and Kotze, S. (2018) Integration and green business development in a trust-building context. Mistra Urban Futures Annual International Conference 'Comparative Co-Production,' Cape Town, South Africa 5-7 November 2018
- Kotze, S., Dymitrow, M. and Ingelhag, K. (2018) Can a city feed itself? Innovations in City-Region Food Systems from a Swedish perspective. 4th Global Food Security, Food Safety and Sustainability Conference, Montreal, Canada, 10-11 May 2019
- Haysom, G., Olsson, E.G.A., Dymitrow, M., Opiyo, M., Taylor Buck, Oloko, M., N., Spring, C., Fermskog, K., Ingelhag, K., Kotze, S., and Gaya Agong', S. Food systems sustainability, for whom and by whom? – An examination of different “food system change” viewpoints. *Sustainability*. DOI: 10.3390/su11123337

Conferences

- Kotze, S. and Dymitrow, M. (2019) The role of trust in street-level organisations within integration projects. ESPANET 2019, Stockholm, Sweden, 5-7 September 2019 (Conference abstract/presentation/paper)
- Kotze, S. Dymitrow, M. and Omondi, L. (2019) Double jeopardy within Swedish Integration: Using South-North collaborations to explore the role of gender within immigrant integration projects. International Transdisciplinarity Conference 'Joining forces for change,' Gothenburg, Sweden, 10-13 September 2019 (Conference abstract/poster)
- Dymitrow, M., Ingelhag, K. and Kotze, S. (2019) The 'Research Forum' as a methodological tool for transdisciplinary co-production. International Transdisciplinarity Conference 'Joining forces for change,' Gothenburg, Sweden, 10-13 September 2019 (Conference abstract/presentation)
- Kotze, S. and Dymitrow, M. (2019) Ticking boxes and clocking in: A critical view of gender mainstreaming within labour market integration. Organising Migration and Integration Contemporary Societies Conference. University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 6-9 November 2019 (conference presentation/abstract/paper)
- Kotze, S. and Dymitrow, M. (2019) Double jeopardy of labour market integration Sweden: the challenge of immigrant women. RINGS2019, Tallin, Estonia, 2-4 October 2019 (Conference abstract/presentation)
- Dymitrow, M., Ingelhag, K. and Kotze, S. (2019). *Local projects replicated: Insights from Urban Rural Gothenburg*. Gothenburg: Chalmers University of Technology, Mistra Urban Futures and Business Region Göteborg

Forthcoming

- Kotze, S., Adler, IL. and Lundgren, U. (2020) Trusting constructive madness. In Dymitrow, M. and Ingelhag, K. (eds). *Anatomy of a 21st-century sustainability project: The untold stories*. (in production)
- Kotze, S. (2020) Gender and integration. The ebb and flow of mainstreaming in projects. In Dymitrow, M. and Ingelhag, K. (eds). *Anatomy of a 21st-century sustainability project: The untold stories*. (in production)
- Kotze, S. (2020) Anatomy of a 21st-century project: A critical analysis. In Dymitrow, M. and Ingelhag, K. (eds). *Anatomy of a 21st-century sustainability project: The untold stories*. (in production)
- Smit, W., Sitas, R., Perry, B., Ness, B., Dymitrow, M., Ingelhag, K., Kotze, S., Gaya Agong', S., Durakovic, E., Haysom, G., Olsson, E.G.A., Opiyo, P. and Taylor-Buck, N. (2019). Local projects replicated, In: Simon, D., Palmer, H. and Riise, J. (eds), *Researching sustainable cities: Comparative co-production for better urban futures*. Bristol: Policy Press

In progress

- Kotze, S. and Dymitrow, M. (2020) Trust as the differentiator between policy and outcome: A street-level approach to immigrant integration. *Journal of Applied Social Science*.
- Kotze, S. and Dymitrow, M. (2020) Ticking boxes and clocking in: A critical view of gender mainstreaming in labour-market integration. *Norwegian Journal of Geography*.
- Kotze, S. and Dymitrow, M. (2020) North-South research collaborations: An empirical evaluation against the 11 principles of transboundary research. *Minerva*.