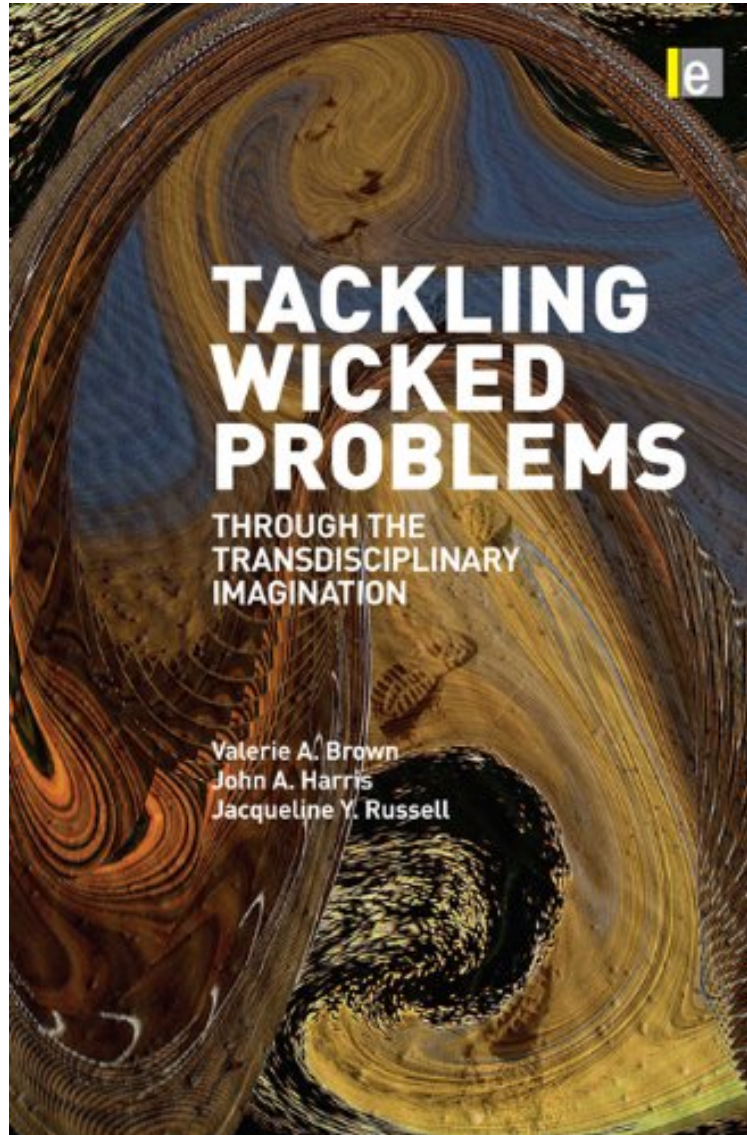


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Tackling Wicked Problems: Through the Transdisciplinary Imagination

Valerie A. Brown, John A. Harris, Jacqueline Russell
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Valerie A. Brown, John A. Harris, Jacqueline Russell : Tackling Wicked Problems: Through the Transdisciplinary Imagination before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tackling Wicked Problems: Through the Transdisciplinary Imagination:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. New ways of thinkingBy new horizonsIt is time that thought leaders remove themselves from the confines of disciplinary silos and understand that to tackle the vexing problems of the world a new approach is needed. This insightful book by Brown presents such a model.1 of 4 people found the

following review helpful. Outstanding innovative insight into sustainability thinkingBy feddavThe authors of Tackling Wicked Problems discuss a range of idea around the notion of sustainability and socio-ecological well being. Wide range of issues discussed, from education, to institutions and future research endeavours.An important read for anyone familiar or interested in the field of soft systems thinking or human ecology.4 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Intellectual inspirationBy Alan AtKissonRigorous yet approachable. If Tackling Wicked Problems was a person, it would "not suffer fools gladly," but it would provide intellectual solace and inspiration to those who are genuinely struggling to think outside the box in connection with sustainability challenges. Highly recommended. - Alan AtKisson, author of Believing Cassandra: How to be an Optimist in a Pessimist's World and The Sustainability Transformation: How to Accelerate Positive Change in Challenging Times

From climate change to GM foods, we are increasingly confronted with complex, interconnected social and environmental problems that span disciplines, knowledge bases and value systems. This book offers a transdisciplinary, open approach for those working towards resolving these 'wicked' problems and highlights the crucial role of this 'transdisciplinary imagination' in addressing the shift to sustainable futures.Tackling Wicked Problems provides readers with a framework and practical examples that will guide the design and conduct of their own open-ended enquiries. In this approach, academic disciplines are combined with personal, local and strategic understanding and researchers are required to recognise multiple knowledge cultures, accept the inevitability of uncertainty, and clarify their own and others' ethical positions. The authors then comment on fifteen practical examples of how researchers have engaged with the opportunities and challenges of conducting transdisciplinary inquiries.The book gives those who are grappling with complex problems innovative methods of inquiry that will allow them to work collaboratively towards long-term solutions.

'Tackling Wicked Problems is a timely volume that deserves a wide, global readership.' Nature 'I am really delighted to see a work that provides a philosophical foundation for Post-Normal Science, while enriching and expanding its vision. Valerie Brown and her colleagues - really comrades - have achieved the new synthesis for a scientific practice that is so necessary for the current age. At last there is a statement for science that leaves behind the linear logic and truncated self-awareness that was the heritage of Descartes. With its themes of plurality, paradox, complementarity and ethical commitment, Tackling Wicked Problems provides the means for science to make a creative response to the challenges of our time.' Jerome Ravetz, James Martin Institute for Science and Civilization, University of Oxford, UK 'Tackling Wicked Problems is a timely, inspirational and important book. Complex and 'wicked problems', are common and growing - within societies, regions, locally and globally. They are found in relation to many issues including environmental, human health, urban planning and transport. Importantly, the cross-connections between issues are typically part of the complexity. So far our decision-making processes have not served us well in addressing these issues. Yet the need for more effective decision-making processes is urgent, with anthropogenic climate change perhaps the prime example of a wicked problem in need of urgent action. This book provides an excellent analysis of the inadequacies of our current approaches and the benefits of frameworks based on open transdisciplinary inquiry for addressing 'wicked problems'. It complements this theoretical basis with a strong set of practical examples of open transdisciplinary inquiry by 15 authors from across the natural and social sciences, the humanities, environmental and public sector management, political science and community activism. Tackling Wicked Problems should have an important place in both under and post-graduate courses across a range of University faculties. But it deserves (and we need) it to be far more widely read - by decision-makers in both the public and private sectors and all of us interested in more effective action on the many current and emerging 'wicked problems' that threaten to undermine humanity's future.' Ronnie Harding, Foundation Director, Institute of Environmental Studies, University of NSW, Australia 'One of the critical questions posed by the ecological crisis concerns the nature of the knowledge we need to deal with it. Tackling Wicked Problems tackles the problem by offering a unique transdisciplinary approach to inquiry, one that is capable of integrating the natural and social sciences. Integrating both empirical and normative investigation, it offers a framework that is at the same time theoretical, epistemological and practical. The book brings together the full range of separate but yet interconnected perspectives that have to be brought to bear on the most challenging questions of our time.' Frank Fischer, Professor of Politics and International Studies, Rutgers University, USA 'You owe it to yourself to read the book for your answer.' Gail Purvis, Compute Scotland. 'Tackling Wicked Problems is a timely, inspirational and important book...it deserves...to be far more widely read - by decision-makers in both the public and private sectors ' Ronnie Harding, Designophy. 'Tackling Wicked Problems takes a bold path to show that there are different ways- which remain more faithful to embodied reality - of making knowledge work for us.' Mike Hulme, ECOSAbout the AuthorValerie A. Brown AO, BSc MEd PhD is Director of the Local Sustainability Project, Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University; and Emeritus Professor of Environmental Health, University of Western Sydney. She has held national advisory positions in public health, environmental management and higher education, and presented innovative programs in these fields in the Asia-Pacific, Canada and Europe. Valerie is the author of over 200 research papers and 12 books on linking social and environmental issues and social

change, the most recent being *Towards whole-of-community engagement: a toolkit of strategies* 2004 (with Heather Aslin); *Sustainability and health: supporting global integrity in public health* Earthscan 2005 (with J. Grootjans, J. Ritchie, M. Townsend and G. Verrinder); *Social learning and environmental management* Earthscan 2005 (with M. Keen and R. Dyball) and *Leonardo's vision. A guide to collective thinking and action* SENSE 2008 John A. Harris is a university academic, outdoors educator, and former Head of School of Environmental Science, University of Canberra. He has over 35 years experience in ecological and social research, post-graduate supervision and undergraduate teaching. John was a pioneer in the establishment of the professional field of natural resource management in Australia. His academic teaching and research appointments at CSIRO Plant Industry and various universities include the Australian National University, Colorado State University and the University of Hanoi as well as consultant ecologist to UN Man and the Biosphere Programme and the National Museum of Australia. Publications include Harris, J. and Deane, P. 2005 'The Ethics of Social Engagement: Learning to Live and Living to Learn' in Keen, M., Brown, V.A., and Dyball R. (eds) *Social Learning in Environmental Management: Towards a Sustainable Future*, Earthscan, London; and Harris, J.A. and Robottom, I. 1997 'Postgraduate Environmental Education Research: Meeting the needs of the community' in *Australian Journal of Environmental Education*, Volume 13, pp. 49-54. In 2006 Jacqueline Y. Russell completed a highly-regarded PhD thesis on transdisciplinary frameworks for thinking about and tackling complex human-environmental problems. She joined the Social Sciences Program of the Australian Bureau of Rural Sciences in 2007 where she was involved in several major collaborative investigations into the social dimensions of managing Australia's natural resources. In particular, she conducted research into rural people's perceptions of climate change and adaptation; the negotiation of conflict over water resources in a time of unprecedented drought; and the social impacts of the drought on Australia's rural communities. Jacqueline is currently a postdoctoral research fellow in the Research School of Social Sciences of the Australian National University. She is part of a leading transdisciplinary research team that is applying innovative approaches to engaging regional communities, local and state governments and a range of experts in deliberation about future climate change. She is co-author of a number of reports on her research and has presented papers on the findings at local, national and international conferences.