Framing Statement:

This annotated bibliography contains five major sections of focus: environmental rhetoric/ ecocomposition, feminist/ standpoint theory, place-based pedagogies, service-learning, and theories about place and space. While each section represents an area of research in its own right, this annotated bibliography seeks to put some of these areas in conversation with one another. This annotated bibliography draws from book-length discussions of space and place, essays about feminist pedagogy, articles presenting case studies of place-based curriculums, and other source types.

One theme present in this bibliography concerns the status of women as a marginalized group and the importance of their situatedness and “othered” perspective. Standpoint theorists such as Harding and Wylie regard the perspectives of marginalized/ oppressed/ “othered” people as preferable to—and more objective than—the perspectives of those in power. These articles tend to locate women (particularly women of color) in these marginalized positions. For example, Maylei Blackwell’s Chicana Power describes the ways in which Chicana women had to practice a form of double activism (gender and national origin) in order to make their voices heard.

Various chapters from The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader helped me to think about the connections between “situatedness” and choosing service-learning projects, particularly for a place-based class that advocates a community-based model of service-learning. Since standpoint
theory argues that marginalized groups are better able to describe reality from both their perspective and the perspectives of those in power, asking such groups to articulate their needs (i.e., the issues they care about) would provide students with ideas for topics/projects they can contribute to. Using the text ¡Chicana Power! as a case study of the connections between feminism and place-based rhetoric, for example, we can see how marginalized groups create “rhetorical spaces” for their work and gather in both literal places (e.g., conference rooms, kitchens, college dormitories) and textual spaces (e.g., pamphlets, activist zines, and research articles) to accomplish their work. Judy Whipps’ essay makes direct connections between situatedness, place-based education, feminism, and community work. While she does not call students’ projects “service-learning” per se, her thoughts about collaborating with community members are valuable, especially because she uses “place” as the focus for students’ work. In addition, scholars such as bell hooks and Alison Wylie have suggested that spaces are political.

Other sources in the annotated bibliography—such as Yi-Fu Tuan’s book—define “space” and “place” more literally or connect “places” to rhetorical concepts such as the topoi (e.g., Miller, Moe). Selections from Environmental Rhetoric and Ecologies of Place (e.g., Carpenter, William and Brandt) provide case studies of place-based rhetorics that students can investigate in their service-learning projects. For example, William and Brandt’s article provides a useful framework for analyzing discussions of place, since both “place-based arguments” and “place as rhetoric” arguments can exist. The chapters in this collection suggest that people develop attachments to places and that their identities are impacted by their relationships to places, which corroborates with Tuan’s “experiential” perspective in the development of a “sense of place.”
While Rickert, Miller, and Tuan all provide theoretical definitions of “place” and “space,” scholarship in ecocomposition tends to ask students to define these terms for themselves. Killingsworth & Palmer, for instance, provide students with various “positions” or lenses with which students can analyze environmental discourse. But this discussion, too, is theoretical. Emphasizing the practical application of knowledge, Annie Ingram’s article makes direct connections between the tenets of ecocomposition and service-learning work.

This annotated bibliography also draws connection between activism, agency, and the environment by specifically discussing how material objects (and environments) impact the creation of knowledge; Nash, Haraway, and Rickert situate these objects as agents or “actants” within the situation. This research suggests that students should begin to think about how resources (tools, texts, etc.) in a particular place or ecology impact the work that gets done—and, in turn, the learning that takes place.

More succinctly, the themes and claims that this annotated bibliography emphasizes include:

- We should value—and prefer—the perspectives of women and community groups because of their unique (and objective) situatedness
- Positionality is tied (at least in some ways) to place
- Developing a “sense of place” can help students become more engaged in their projects and connected to their communities
- Community members should direct community-driven service-learning projects
- Place-based education is not ecocomposition or “nature writing”; some models ask students to engage in local projects that matter to them, whether those projects have an ecological/ environmental focus or not
• “Place” matters in both feminist pedagogies and place-based education
• Feminist pedagogy is about empowerment
• Objects have agency; places and spaces impact the learning experience

Based on the readings I have completed for this annotated bibliography, I have developed a list of preliminary questions that can help guide my thesis research:

• What models of place-based writing exist in college-level writing classrooms?
• What are the learning objectives of a place-based writing class?
• How could/should service-learning be incorporated?
• How do instructors of service-learning courses account for both physical and rhetorical places/spaces in discussions about site selection, community issues, and students’ own situatedness?
• Do these courses advocate developing a “sense of place” or attachment to these service-learning sites? If so, in what ways?
• How are service-learning topics/projects/issues framed in relation to community needs and particular locations? Are particular populations (such as marginalized groups) favored in the site selection process?
• How can instructors use concepts such as “topos” (rhetorical spaces) and the affordances of physical environments to help students invent their topical interests and choose a relevant service-learning site?
Environmental Rhetoric / Ecocomposition


In this nine-chapter text, M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jacqueline S. Palmer discuss the intersections of rhetoric and environmental politics along eight major topics: the historical development of the term “environmentalist,” the concepts of “scientific activism” and “scientific ecologies,” how scientific information gets taken up by media sources and the popular press, the genre of the “Environmental Impact Statement,” ideals of an “ecotopia” in environmental literature, “ecological economics,” and the strange position of the scientific activist in various discourse communities. With the concept of discourse communities as an example of different perspectives on a topic, Killingsworth and Palmer then share a description of “ecospeak.” Essentially, “Ecospeak has emerged as a makeshift discourse for defining novel positions in public debate...” (8). In other words, there are multiple perspectives on policy positions regarding the environment, and ecospeak is the discourse about those positions. According to the authors, these positions rest along a continuum of humanity’s relationship to nature: nature as object, nature as resource, and nature as spirit (11). So, while “mainstream science” tends to reside near the “nature as object” marker, for example, the government tends to land between “nature as object” and “nature as resource” positions (11). Following this continuum of perspectives, the authors then list four concepts for analyzing the rhetoric of environmental politics: hegemony, opposition, tension, and “direction of appeal” (14); these analytical concepts tend to correlate with a discourse community’s position along the continuum. Ultimately, Killingsworth and Palmer conclude that—in order for the public to act on environmental discourse and the
government to further environmental policy—rhetors must tailor their message for multiple discourse communities.

Some other important concepts of this text include: a description of Kenneth Burke’s concept of “identification” and how it is related to the establishment of ethos (23), an explanation of the definitional differences between environmentalists and developmentalists (24-34), and the potential connections between ecofeminism and post-patriarchal society (234-35). For example, the fictive novel *Ecotopia* portrays women as “more likely to be ecologically wise leaders than men” (234). This is an interesting (yet unsupported) thought, because other texts I have read (i.e., *Half the Sky*; Mies and Shiva) suggest that women are more deeply affected by environmental problems than men, partially because of their working conditions, but also because of their child rearing responsibilities. As a result, I wonder whether the labeling of environmentalists as “others” (a marginalized group) would constitute them as a “privileged” perspective in regards to standpoint theory. As I’ve mentioned earlier, some literature suggests that women might provide preferable perspectives on environmental issues, which—again—seems to align with standpoint theory.


Peter Wayne Moe describes how the metaphor of “place” can connect ancient rhetorical concepts to contemporary composition curriculums. In an ecocomposition curriculum, for example, “place” metaphors can help our students understand the rhetorical situation, their place in the “ecology” of writing practices, and the ways they can argue from their unique positions.
The central argument of this article is that certain place-based metaphors in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and certain tenets of ecocomposition theory (“which connects issues of place, ecology, and discourse”), complement one another in a way that “ecocomposition may provide theory by which not only to guide students through the academy, but also to rejuvenate classical rhetoric within our own field.”

To support his argument, Moe lists many of the place-based metaphors found in Composition Studies, such as the examples of “entering into” a conversation and determining “where” to begin an argument. Next, Moe argues that these place-based metaphors are tied to our spatial understandings of form and content in written works. Quoting Sidney I. Dobrin and Christian R. Weisser, Moe then connects this emphasis on place to the goals of ecocomposition: “ecocomposition is the study of written discourse and its relationships to the places in which it is situated and situates” (10, emphases added). In other words, Moe suggests that “place” in the environmental, ecocomposition sense, should be added to the list of factors included in the rhetorical situation.


Linda Nash uses two examples to illustrate some of the nuances between human agency and intentions, nature’s “structure,” and nonhuman agency. In the first example, Nash compares a bee to an architect. The former can build a hive but “cannot envision the hive prior to its building”; the bee does not think or have intention. The latter (the architect) can plan the building in his/her head prior to building it, so he/she is considered an agent (67). Nash argues that this conception of human agency is too limiting because it does not account for the agency of nature.
Citing Bruno Latour, she suggests “agency is better understood as something that is dispersed among humans and non-humans in ... ‘actor-networks’” (67). She then cites Tim Ingold’s belief that our unit of analysis for studying agency should be the “organism-in-its-environment rather than the self-contained individual confronting an external world” (67). In other words, “environments shape human intentions” (68).

To explain this idea, Nash describes a second example regarding the development of tidewater rice plantations in Georgia. Although plantation workers brought over some practices and ideas for rice plantation technologies with them, the unique setting of this location “suggested certain alternatives” (68). It was only once the workers were in the field interacting with the environment that they were able to envision solutions that might work for this particular place (68). Thus, human agency and nature’s constraints were not the only factors at work here; the natural environment had its own type of agency in the situation.

This source is useful for my thesis research because it complicates notions of agency that may be assumed in feminist or service-learning classrooms. Instead of just students—or local communities—having agency, Nash suggests that natural environments (i.e., particular places) will shape the types of work students and humans (in general) can do.

**Feminist / Standpoint Theory**


In this six-chapter book-length discussion of Chicana feminism, Maylei Blackwell traces the history (and historiography) of the movement throughout the 1960s and 1970s. To tell the stories of the activists of this period, Blackwell uses an oral history methodology. She also
frames these stories using her theoretical framework of “retrofitted memory.” In addition to using such frameworks to analyze the stories of this feminist movement, Blackwell emphasizes that “the telling of history is political” (6). Importantly, Blackwell also situates “women of color feminisms” within the three waves framework (18-21). She also points out that many women of color feminisms did not explicitly use the word “feminism” to describe their projects (24), and that many of the issues taken up during 1960s and 1970s Chicano activism involved gender. Moreover, Chicana feminists participated in a form of “double activism” by focusing on both Chicano/a issues and women’s issues (30).

This book is useful for my thesis research because it provides me with a better understanding of one type of women of color feminism. Moreover, the concepts of “intersectionality,” “third spaces,” and “multiple forms of oppression” seem to align with the concept of standpoint theory, which regards the experiences of marginalized people as preferable accounts of history. In addition, although Blackwell does not theorize the concepts of “service-learning” or “place,” she does discuss how community groups use texts to articulate their political ideologies and organize activity, and she does describe how such texts create political and rhetorical spaces (41, 142).


In the introduction to The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader collection, Sandra Harding traces the early history of standpoint theory and offers some beginning definitions for the term. She outlines some assumptions that guide feminist standpoint theory—that such a theory should
start from women’s experiences, that women should account for the political nature of their research, that “knowledge is always socially constructed,” and that oppressed groups have unique (and less restricted) ways of seeing the world than those in the dominant group (8-9)—and also describes some misconceptions related to standpoint theory; namely, that it is not synonymous with “relativism” (10-11).


bell hooks describes her own experiences understanding “the politics of location” by describing her childhood experiences of growing up at a boundary space. Some of her central arguments are that “language is ... a place of struggle,” and her struggle “is also a struggle of memory against forgetting” (153-55). She argues that her position at the margin is “much more than a site of deprivation....it is also a site of radical possibility, a space of resistance” (156). She uses her marginal space to create counterhegemonic discourse (157) and urges others to “enter that space” with her (159). Throughout her chapter, hooks constantly refers to spaces. In closing her piece, she provides a descriptive definition of “spaces” for the reader: “Spaces can be real or imagined. Spaces can tell storied and unfold histories. Spaces can be interrupted, appropriated, and transformed through artistic and literary practice” (159). She then states that using spaces constitutes a political act.

Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva begin to describe what they call the “capitalist patriarchal world system” (333). This system involves the colonization of three groups: women, foreign peoples (and their lands), and nature/the earth (333). Through their research, Mies and Shiva saw that ecological disasters affected women more than men and that women were more likely to fight for environmental policies (334). By examining environmental destruction, some women began to create movements and “a sense of solidarity” among themselves (334-35). The second half of this brief chapter suggests that, contrary to popular beliefs about “Man’s freedom and happiness depend[ing] on an ongoing process of emancipation from nature” and control over nature and its resources (335), the concept of “emancipation” or freedom from nature does not align with concepts of nurturing or preserving life (336).


In this brief article, Carolyn M. Shrewsbury describes three concepts that are central to feminist pedagogy: community, empowerment, and leadership. She begins by defining the feminist classroom as a “community of learners” that is “empowered to act responsibly toward one another and the subject matter and to apply that learning to social action” (8). She then states that although this community is comprised of individuals with differences, students learn to respect these differences and use them to achieve a consensus-driven goal (8). According to Shrewsbury, this perspective is “ecological and holistic” (8).
In terms of empowerment, feminist pedagogy regards power as “energy, capacity, and potential rather than as domination” (9). Thus, members in a feminist classroom seek to increase each other’s power and potential. Citing Carol Gilligan’s theory of moral development, Shrewsbury states that women tend to value connections and relationships more than rules, but the “morality of rights” dominates classrooms (12). In a classroom built around community, she argues, “there is a need and desire to move learning beyond the walls of the classroom. Theory can be extended to action, and action can come back to inform theory and that can lead again to action” (13). Here, Shrewsbury seems to call for service-learning projects in which students form their own learning/classroom communities and also interact with communities outside academia.

Discussing the last concept—leadership—Shrewsbury suggests allowing students to help develop course goals and objectives (13). This aligns well with service-learning projects, since students need to articulate the goals for their work and use reflection to (re)evaluate those goals and how/if they are meeting them. Shrewsbury then links leadership to agency (14), but she does not address how communities (such as service-learning partners) might assume a leadership role or articulate their own needs in the relationship. For this reason, Shrewsbury’s article presents a nice basis for the concepts of feminist community, empowerment, and leadership, but only from the student/teacher’s perspective. For my thesis project, I would want to pair these thoughts with insights from community partners or “true” (non-classroom) communities.

Alison Wylie defines standpoint theory as “an explicitly political as well as social epistemology” (339). She supports the claims of other authors in this collection when she states that certain groups’ diversity and knowledge might be epistemologically advantageous and “may significantly enrich scientific enquiry” (339, 345). Wylie then makes distinctions between “situated knowledge” and “standpoint theory”; situatedness informs what we know and standpoint theory is a project of understanding “how power relations inflect knowledge: what systematic limitations are imposed by the social location of different classes or collectives of knowers” (343-44). In other words, standpoint theory asks “what epistemic effects a (collectively defined) social location may have” on the types of knowledge generated from such a group (349).

**Place-Based Pedagogies**


Ball and Lai describe the historical trends of place-based education (PBE) through their literature review, which emphasizes the differences between ecohumanism and a “critical” pedagogy of place. Although the ecohumanist tradition posits that *where* students learn is important, and works to remedy the “ethos of placelessness” of education (264), it also tends to assume a depoliticized community or place (266-67). A “critical” pedagogy of place, on the other hand, recognizes that:

Human communities, or places, are politicized, social constructions that often marginalize individuals, groups, as well as ecosystems. If place-based educators seek to connect place with self and community, they must identify and confront
the way that power works through places to limit the possibilities for human and nonhuman others. (Kumashiro, qtd. in Ball and Lai, 267)

Thus, critical pedagogies of place understand that humans and nonhumans can be “othered” in certain pedagogies, including place-based education.

After describing these two main approaches to PBE, Ball and Lai then outline some of the ways students can resist such pedagogies; mainly, students might not be interested in “local” literature or concerns. Because many institutions of higher education value national canons and train students for a globalized world (in essence, these curriculums marginalize place and favor “national” representations of art), some student might regard an emphasis on the local as less valuable or interesting (271-73).

Last, the authors describe a “radical” model of PBE that values the local and involves students in the process of articulating the course material. Essentially, teachers and students choose and read local texts, literature, and art in their classroom. However, this is significant because the texts can include genres that are not usually valued on a national level, such as “yard art,” local stories, bulletin boards, hip hop performances, and materials culled from local churches, homeless shelters, and so on (274, 279). Ball and Lai argue that “the inclusion of local texts, artifacts, and performances can in itself be a critical move that implicitly confronts the marginalization of place” (275). In addition, through the act of articulating which texts are worthy of study, this pedagogy allows students and local inhabitants “a greater voice in the spatial politics of culture” (280). Ball and Lai then further emphasize that the process of finding a voice (i.e., choosing which local texts and performances matter and should be included in the classroom) helps students to develop agency and learn to value place (280). This is an act of “empowering” the locals (282).
This source is useful for my project because it describes two popular approaches to place-based education, which I can use in my literature review to describe the current status of the pedagogy. In addition, although the authors tend to focus on a literature- or humanities-focused version of PBE, some of their descriptions of how to select texts can also apply to writing classrooms. Particularly for assignments which ask students to trace literacy practices or investigate discourse communities, a focus on the local (and the genres present in local communities) is compatible.


Rick Carpenter discusses the resistance that citizens of Valdosta County (in Georgia) felt towards the development of a biomass electric generating plant and the rhetorical constructions of place that were used to stop the project. The two most important portions of the chapter involve 1) the distinctions between “space” and “place” and 2) the discussion of how place is related to identity. Stated simply, this case study demonstrates how stakeholders from a variety of locations around the county used their spatial network to define the issues about their place (e.g., air quality and water usage) and argue against the creation of the plant. Moreover, by citing literature on the “ecologies of place,” Carpenter suggests that “environments shape writers but writers also shape their environments” (207).

In this brief article, Jacobs argues that place-based writing is a beneficial pedagogy because it helps students connect with their environments and is personal (50-51); “place-based writing is focused on relationships” (51), and “place-based writing has democratic virtues” (52). To support these claims, Jacobs uses anecdotes from own teaching experience (and brief samples of students’ work) to illustrate each of these points. Jacobs encourages writing faculty to “invite [students] to write from personal experience, about meaningful places” (52). However, much of his descriptions seem to align with the “nature writing” perspective, in which students are not challenged to investigate their places critically; instead, forming connections and reflecting seem to be enough for Jacobs’ class.


In this essay, Judy Whipps argues that ideas about community and place found in feminist theory and pragmatist education can complement and strengthen place-based education. To illustrate her arguments, she reflects on the success of a new program she helped create at Grand Valley State University in Muskegon, Michigan. Throughout this reflection, Whipps gestures to concepts such as a “logic of home” to describe the relationships students can develop to local communities and the land (31). Like Ball and Lai (cited above) mention, Whipps blames higher education for deemphasizing place by focusing on abstract, global thinking rather than local, practical knowledge (32).

Citing work by John Dewey, Whipps then describes how pragmatism aligns with place-based education because “the particularities of position and place in ‘actual life’ are important”
(34). As standpoint theory research suggests (e.g., Harding; Wylie), women’s position matters in accounting for their experiences and the knowledge that they produce.

Throughout the entire essay, Whipps emphasizes the importance of having community members involved in her students’ education and the importance of letting her students “study the issues that [they] are interested in” (36). Citing Paulo Freire, Whipps suggests that students should practice “thematic analysis” while interacting with community members—a way of listening to determine which issues are most important to the group (37). This exercise helps students to select appropriate “objects of attention” (38). Then, once students get involved in their projects, they may begin to feel like “capable agents of change” (39). Essentially, in Whipps’ place-based curriculum, “place” functioned as a meeting ground for the students and their communities, as well as the subject matter of the “problems” they addressed in their projects.

This source is useful for my thesis research in a few important ways. First, the essay makes a direct connection between place-based education and feminist theory through a discussion of situatedness, place, and community. Second, Whipps’ description of choosing projects seems like a good model for a community-driven service-learning course.


Deborah Williams and Elizabeth Brandt describe the how the place-based attachments that residents of Superior, Arizona felt toward their town varied based on their status and history with the place. More specifically, this chapter discusses how residents approached the potential
development of a mine, which would provide work to a large portion of the community.

Essentially, two opinions were expressed: those who favored developing the mine tended to be poorer Latino workers who remembered (or had worked in) mines of the past (50), and those who opposed developing the mine tended to be wealthier, newer residents, artists, and environmentalists. In other words, both groups differed in their “sense of place” (45). According to Williams and Bradnt, sense of place is:

> a concept used to convey the interaction between people and their places and denotes the personal and emotional connections, which we as individuals and communities create and hold with places. This interaction creates place meanings and attachments that extend through time and space. (44 emphasis maintained)

As a result of these differing sense of places, the stakeholders framed their arguments for (or against) developing the mine differently—the “for” camp emphasized job creation and a connection to history (i.e., prior mining lifestyles) and the “against” camp argued for saving the mountains and unique views of the region (45-47). These examples show how peoples’ identities are impacted by places (47).

Another important contribution of this chapter is the description of two types of rhetorical deployments of place: “place-based arguments” and “place as rhetoric” (45). Place-based arguments tend to describe the place itself and make appeals to save the place; the features of the place become support for the argument. Place-as-rhetoric arguments “refer to the material (physical and embodied) aspects of place having meaning and consequence....place as rhetoric assumes that place is rhetorical” (45). This distinction of place arguments provides a framework for analyzing discourse about place.
In her contribution to the *Ecocomposition* anthology, Annie Merrill Ingram advocates that instructors incorporate a service-learning component into their Composition courses because service learning helps students to connect classroom theory (e.g., readings) with practical application, or praxis (209-11). The majority of the article consists of Ingram’s reflection and advice from her own “Environmental Writing” course. In addition, Ingram connects service learning to a larger theory of Ellen Cushman’s “public intellectual” as well as a version of “activist research” (212-13). In addition to offering example student end-of-course reflections, Ingram also includes useful appendices: a sample course syllabus (225-30) and “Assignments and Policies” statement (231-33). She also describes her “read-do-reflect-write” sequence of class activities (219), which asks students to read about environmental issues, do work at their service-learning site, reflect on their experience and connect it to concepts and theories covered in class readings, and write (analyze, interpret) what they learned.


In this brief article, Jean Strait and Tim Sauer define service-learning and describe an e-service model (62-63), provide examples of students’ work from various e-service case studies (63-64), explain the challenges of an e-service model (64), and offer suggestions for other faculty
who’d like to design an e-service project (64-65). Essentially, an e-service project is “distributed service-learning” (62); instructors of online courses ask their students to partner with a local community organization that they would like to work with, and the instructor provides opportunities for students to reflect on their service-learning work in an online environment. However, because students in a distance-learning (online) course live in many different areas and might be unfamiliar with community groups in their region, instructors are challenged to conduct research on groups in the students’ local areas and help students find placements (63). In addition, instructors need to train their students (by explaining the goals of a service-learning project), plan in extra time for unexpected complications, and design plenty of reflective assignments for students to complete (64).

This source is useful for my thesis research because it complicates notions of place in service-learning projects by moving engagement to largely online spaces and environments. From a place-based pedagogy perspective, service-learning projects should occur in a region close to the learning institution. However, with today’s commuter population and the popularity of online courses, perhaps an e-service model could work at a university. This article raises the question of whether e-service would take place in digital spaces (e.g., providing writing service to an organization via the internet) or whether students in online courses could complete their service-learning work in their own hometowns and share their experiences with other students in their online course. This is a tension of place-based service-learning projects that I’d like to explore in more depth.

**Theories about Place, Space, and Invention**

Miller, Carolyn R. “The Aristotelian *Topos*: Hunting for Novelty.” *Rereading Aristotle’s*

In this book chapter, Miller builds upon the definition of “topos” from Aristotle (as a “place” for finding arguments) and suggests that we should move beyond the Platonic understanding of “discovering” into an understanding of invention as “creation” (137). Miller then uses McKeon’s ideas about the commonplace serving as a boundary between the familiar and unfamiliar (132). She describes a hunting metaphor in which the hunter might begin his/her expedition looking for something in particular (which we see as a “static” concept of “the known”) and then the hunter looks at the affordances of the space he/she inhabits (“the unknown”) and uses that perspective to create a new focus for “the hunt.” Miller presents the idea of a “semantic space” for invention, which involves the connections between various points/perspectives and the possible recombinations that result from searching from various perspectives.

This source is useful for my research because it defines invention in terms of one’s prior knowledge; when one has prior knowledge—for example, the space is “known,” then they can “discover” their topics, as the topos suggests. However, when one does not have prior knowledge, all space is regarded as the “unknown” and invention becomes an act of creating within a novel situation. Miller describes the topos as a “source[s] for argument[s]” (137), and this concept provides a nice example of the rhetorical, discursive understanding of places, as compared with more literal understandings of places, such as Tuan’s.

Rickert draws on Heidegger and other theories of object agency in order to question rhetoric’s historic positioning of the human rhetor as the central “force” in creating rhetoric. He does not believe that human agency is fixed or that humans are the only beings capable of agency (objects also act and influence), and, in addition, humans are only capable of attending to or understanding part of what is happening with objects around them at any time. He defines “ambiance” as a dynamic space where invention happens, internally and externally, through environmental changes and stimuli and where relationships form among items, people, what they produce, their physical environment or surroundings, and what it produces. While humans are never the only agents in invention, they can continually work to attune themselves to environments around them and shift their attention, thus understanding invention already happening around them.

For my research, the most important sections of this book are chapter 1, “Toward the Chora: Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer on Emplaced Invention,” and chapter 2, “Invention in the Wild: On Locating Kairos in Space-Time.” In these chapters, Rickert traces the terms “chora” and “topos” and defines them in terms of rhetorical spaces and physical/rhetorical places, respectively. Rickert also argues that rhetorical invention (e.g., inventing a “topic” for a service-learning project or selecting a service-learning site) is always changing because it is temporally- and spatially-situated. In addition, objects have agency and affect invention. Rickert encourages readers to embrace the experience of time, space, and place as factors that control invention, which is not something that humans have complete control over.

As the title suggests, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* defines and describes the terms “space” and “place” in relation to a variety of human experiences and sense-based perceptions, including body posture in space, “spatial ability” (i.e., what spaces allow us to do), and human perception of time in space. In the introduction, Yi-Fu Tuan (a professor of geography) asks “In what ways do people attach meaning to and organize space and place?” (5), which serves as the guiding question throughout the text. He also describes three themes of the text: human biology and development affect our understandings of space and place, there are fundamental differences between “spaces” and “places,” and our knowledge of places is impacted by the amount (and types) of experiences we have with them. As a result, it is possible to know places both “intimately” (i.e., through sensory experiences) and “conceptually” (6). However, the most basic assumption that Tuan makes about spaces and places is that they are best understood in terms of human experiences and perception.

For the purposes of my research, the most important portions of this text regard the descriptions and definitions of “space” and “place.” Throughout chapter six, for example, Tuan provides an example of humans traveling through a maze (undifferentiated space) and turning that unknown region into meaningful locations, or places. Thus, Tuan suggests that space becomes place when we identify objects that make movement and spatial features familiar (71). In other words, “When space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place” (73). Another important concept for a service-learning project involves the idea of spatial attachment. Throughout chapter 10 (“Intimate Experiences of Place”), Tuan argues that humans attach meaning to places through familiarity and appreciation of objects. Speaking in language similar to that of network theory—think “nodes” instead of “ties” here—Tuan suggests “the more ties there are [to a particular place], the stronger the emotional bond [we feel for it]” (158).
combining these concepts—spaces becomes places when we attach meaning to them, and our experiences with objects in the environment is partially responsible for our attachment to places—I see some implications for service-learning courses. If Tuan’s assumptions are true, than we may infer that students who develop attachments to their service-learning sites (i.e., those that create a strong “sense of place”) may benefit more from the experience than those that do not. However, this raises the question about whether students’ prior knowledge or attachment to a place might impact the types of work they’re willing to do within that space—what if the community organization thinks differently or challenges the student’s conception of the place? For a service-learning course, it would be interesting to investigate how students approach service-learning sites based on their prior experiences and knowledge of the site: is it a well-defined place or an unknown space? In addition to these definitional contributions, Tuan’s text suggests that accounting for humans’ sensory experiences is integral to understanding their “sense of place.” This opens up possibilities for my students, as their reflections and definitions of places can draw from this type of data (in addition to discursive sources, such as conversations and texts).