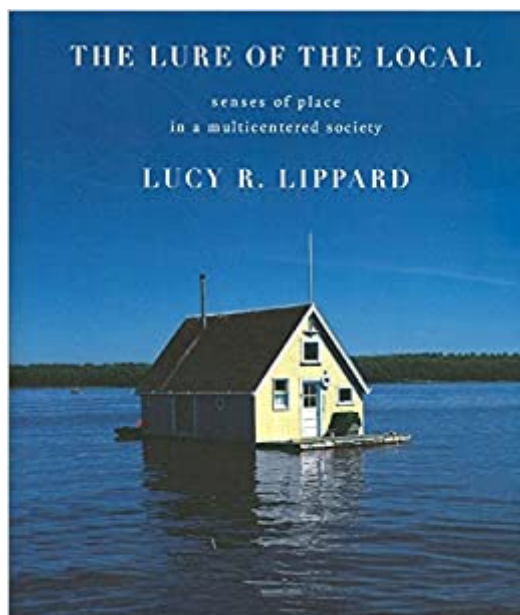


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# The Lure Of The Local: Senses Of Place In A Multicentered Society



## Synopsis

In *The Lure of the Local* Lucy R. Lippard weaves together cultural studies, history, geography, and contemporary art to provide a fascinating examination of our multiple senses of place. Divided into five parts—•Around Here; Manipulating Memory; Down to Earth: Land Use; The Last Frontiers: Cities and Suburbs; and Looking Around—the book extends far beyond the confines of the art worlds, including issues of community, land use, perceptions of nature, how we produce the landscape, and how the landscape affects our lives. Praised by critics and readers alike, she consistently makes unexpected connections between contemporary art and its political, social, and cultural contexts.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A discursive look at the ongoing transformation of the American landscape. Art critic Lippard (*Mixed Blessings*, not reviewed, etc.) posits that Americans are rapidly losing their sense of place and their local loyalties as a result of the country's fin-de-siècle homogenization, courtesy of look-alike Walmarts and McDonald's, strip malls and housing developments, and thanks as well to hybrid cultural styles that see a new Trump luxury hotel in downtown New York augured in by practitioners of the Chinese art of feng shui, or geomancy. Lippard writes with undisguised nostalgia for a different, more historically aware America; at the top of each text page runs a journal of her life in the little town of Georgetown, Me., where such virtues presumably still obtain. Recognizing that regionalism is a cultural invention and as such somewhat artificial, she explores the possibilities for

place-based public art that "has both roots and reach" and that honors local history and mores. She also looks into the prospects for preserving that older, idiomatic, vernacular America while allowing that, given their druthers, most people would often rather build for the future than maintain the past. (Only lack of money keeps them from doing so, she writes, quoting a colleague who observes that "poverty is a wonderful preservative of the past.") Some of her themes--for instance, "alienated displacement" and "the possibility of a multicentered society," whatever that is--grow a little wearisome as they are repeated throughout the text. But on the whole Lippard's narrative is interesting and thoughtful, and her critiques are often delightfully acidic, especially when she deals with enervating planned suburbs and gated communities and the monstrosities that pass for public art today. The more than 150 illustrations in color and black-and-white complement and extend her discussion very nicely. A solid contribution to popular geography. -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Interesting and thoughtful. . . . Her critiques are often delightfully acidic. . . . A solid contribution to popular geography." # Kirkus Reviews "Lippard has signaled the highest political hopes of art, from her early embrace of '60s conceptual art to her '70s support of feminism to her careful documentation in the '80s of the art of America's ethnic communities. . . [The Lure of the Local] arrives at an auspicious time, as interest in community history is on the rise throughout the country. . . . An encyclopedic study of the art of community." # The Oregonian "An excellent reference guide to recent and historical place-oriented art and activism." # Preservation

She proposes many interesting ideas and for reading it is enjoyable however it is not a scholarly expose on place and her sources are scantily documented

If you are a person who cares about places, an artist who is looking for ideas on how to incorporate a place-based ethic in your work, a nomad who longs for a greater sense of rootedness, or an environmentalist who wants to explore new ways to communicate, this is the book for you. The depth and breadth of Lucy Lippard's experience of America is impressive. She has lived in Maine, New York City, and New Mexico, and has collected stories of artists who are reflecting on their relationship to the place they live from around the country. The book is incredibly diverse, looking at the issues of homelessness, the changing face of the American West, the unique personalities of

suburbs, rural areas, and big cities (to name just a few topics) through the lens of geography and art. The book is well written, although it might seem challenging to some. Expect a left-of-center view from a respected and extremely knowledgeable critic and observer of American life.

I picked this bad boy up at the museumstore at SF Moma. It is a handsome, weighty book, with a beautiful, interesting cover. The book made a good impression on me. My wife and I decided to buy this book because we have been interested in the theme of "landscape as witness". This is a concept we read about in Nancy Spector's accompanying essay in the Guggenheim museum catalog. Basically, the idea as it is expressed in Barney interpreted by Spector is that the landscape is a character in the narrative created by art. As a brief survey of .com will reveal, Lippard is a well regarded writer on art. Honestly, I'd never heard of her before. This could have something to do with me not being intimately familiar with the New York City art scene or otherwise involved with the art world except as an occasional museum goer. Art is sort of at the periphery of my set of interests. None the less, I found this a comprehensive, at times brilliant, survey of both artistic theories about the concept of place as well as a thorough documentation of the specific expressions of these theories in art work. Lippard's scope of reading and breadth of knowledge about art all over the United States (this book is entirely about the U.S.) is nothing short of stunning. The actual form of the book is a little difficult to explain, The book has a five part structure, each part with a title: Around Here, Manipulating Memory, Down to Earth: Land Use, The Last Frontiers: City and Suburbs and Looking Around. Each of these parts contains sub-chapters that are titled with various aspects of the five parts. Lippard's style is basically to situate each chapter with a brief survey of what other writers have said about the "subject", followed by a description of different acts of arts intermingled with commentary. Each of the pages also contains images with substantive critical passages. Along the top of each page, there is a running essay about the author's experiences growing up in Maine. I found her work to be fairly comprehensive: Although she has end notes and a thorough bibliography, I found myself doubting that any of them so totally nailed the relationship between art and the concept of place. If the author or her representatives are reading this, I would recommend updating this book in another couple of years. Lippard is a self-declared liberal. Although I did not always agree with her analysis, I admired the manner in which she was able to outline her bias in a non-intrusive way. She could be more forceful with her arguments. I don't think anybody could begrudge her opinions.

My Childhood home in Georgetown Maine is in this book. I have had many dreams at night of this

beautiful place. My Maine roots go back to the 1600s. I am looking forward to owning this book, to pass down to my children's children. I live in Oklahoma. I will always prefer Lighthouses over oil wells, lobster boats over bass boats, etc.

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